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The Icelandic Canadian

Vol. 7

Winnipeg, Man., Spring 1949

No. 3

EDITORIAL:

STRENGTHEN ALL THE BONDS

At this moment, when the establishment of a Chair in Icelandic Language and Literature in the University of Manitoba seems assured, it is well that we pause and take stock of the material, tangible and intangible, which we have for the preservation of Icelandic culture in North America. Here the word culture is used in its wide European connotation. The instruments available for this purpose, or one might say the fabrics which provide strength and substance to the bonds that stretch across the Atlantic and bind us to the land of our origin, may be said to divide into five categories.

First there is the language and literature, both classic and modern. Nothing need be said here, at least at this time, on that subject. The contributions to the Chair in Icelandic from coast to coast; the voluntary work necessary for the raising of the fund; the enthusiasm with which the announcement of the Chair by the President of the University and the public statements made by His Excellency, Thor Thors, were received; all this demonstrates more convincingly than any mere words, how vital the Icelandic public regards this epoch making step. All are agreed that a bulwark has to be established and maintained for the preservation, at least on the academic and university level of the Icelandic language. This contemplated home for the language and literature in Winnipeg, recognized to be the capital of Iceland in North

America, will be the source from which all our Icelandic cultural agencies will derive strength and inspiration.

The material which can be put in the second category consists of the various kinds of organizations and institutions among us which are so essentially and thoroughly Icelandic in spirit, though both languages may be used. The following may be enumerated: the Icelandic churches, the Þjóðræknisfélag, the Icelandic Canadian Club, the Jón Sigurdson Chapter of the I.O.D.E.; the various kinds of Icelandic celebrations such as the 2nd of August, June 17th, Sumardagurinn fyrsti, the concerts associated with the annual meeting of the Icelandic National League. All these gatherings, at once stimulating and a challenge to greater effort, are a vitally contributing factor in the perpetuating of the finest in the Icelandic tradition.

Then there are the publications. They are both Icelandic and English though predominantly in the Icelandic language. We have the Icelandic weeklies, *Heimskringla* and *Lögberg*, the *Tímarit* of the League and *Sameiningin*. When it became increasingly obvious that these purely Icelandic publications could reach only a part of the people in this country of Icelandic descent this magazine was launched. A similar adventure into the wider field can be seen in *The Parish Messenger* of the First Luth. Church, Winnipeg.

There are two other ways in which the bonds can be strengthened.

First the visits, and this must be a two way traffic. Hon. Thor Thors, in his address the last evening of the meeting of the Icelandic League, stressed how necessary these travels and excursions were. He felt constrained to limit his remarks to the official visits, which, as he pointed out, are but the formal examples of what should be a constant flow back and forth. At present this is much hampered by the exchange situation but that, we hope, will soon improve.

Partly as a substitute for these visits, which even under most favorable conditions must, for purely economic reasons, be very limited, and partly because of its own inherent merit, another method of bringing the people of Iceland and us of the West closer together was launched by this magazine. The central thought behind the project was that people of Icelandic descent abroad should have access to publications in Iceland and that a similar opportunity be given to people in Iceland for access to this magazine and other English language publications here. In that way "Austur" and "Vestur-Íslendingar" will become better acquainted. We want to know what is special and exclusive in the land which is so dear to them, what to them are the abiding values in the common heritage. Through these exchanges they will get to know us as we are, not what they or even we might want us to be. Only with this twofold knowledge can a common approach be made to the common problem of maintaining the ties of kin and heritage.

People of Icelandic extraction in America vary from the one extreme where they are almost exclusively Icelandic in spirit as well as in the language spoken to those who do not know a word in the language and who, unfor-

tunately, seek to discard what they have inherited. All others are within those extremes. A cross-section of their opinions can be obtained if people from different types within those extremes write articles for publication in Iceland, in which they express their thoughts and feelings, frankly and without reservation.

On the other hand we seek articles from Iceland which are peculiarly Icelandic in nature and content. They should be outside of statistical facts and also outside the field of literature which can be approached only through the reading and study of that literature in the original or in translation.

This magazine was fortunate in being able to obtain the assistance of Rev. Friðrik Hallgrímsson, now of Reykjavík, who formerly served congregations here in Manitoba. He has made all the arrangements in Iceland and wrote the first article in *The Icelandic Canadian*. The writer of this survey wrote a similar introduction to the series which was published in the *Lesbók*, the Sunday literary supplement to *Morgunblaðið*, which has the largest circulation of the dailies in Reykjavík.

Since that time two articles from Iceland have appeared in our magazine. The first one was on the Icelandic "Glima", wrestling, by Þorsteinn Einarsson, Director of Athletics in the Department of Education in Iceland. The second was on Mount Hekla by the late Steinþór Sigurðsson, a professor in the Engineering Department of the University of Iceland. In his zeal for scientific discovery he sacrificed his life. On his last and fatal expedition to Mount Hekla he approached too close to the craters and was hit by a volcanic bomb. Very favorable comments have been made about both

those articles as they gave information which was not available through the usual channels.

The second and third articles to appear in Iceland were both written by women. The first one called "Your Land and Mine", "Föðurland þitt og mitt", was written by Mrs. Margaret Wandrey of Seattle. She was selected as her husband was not of Icelandic stock. The other one is our Winnipeg girl Betty White who acquired fame through the nylon stockings she sent to Princess Elizabeth. She was selected because she is a child of one of the many "mixed marriages".

Both these articles were written in English, translated, and then sent to Rev. Hallgrímsson. He took them to Árni Óla, one of the editors of the *Lesbók* and they were published in the *Lesbók* on January 16, and February 6, of this year.

Special reference should be made to Árni Óla and our appreciation of his interest duly recorded. He is strongly of the opinion that information should be gathered about Icelanders abroad and made known to the people of Iceland. This, we understand, is being carried out as a definite policy of the *Lesbók*. Last year a number of biographical sketches were published as well as an interview with Rev. Valdimar Eylands and a letter from an Icelandic woman in New Zealand. In the issue of the *Lesbók* of February 13, last, there is a translation of the address delivered by John J. Bildfell on the pioneer Icelanders in Winnipeg which appeared in the Autumn, 1947, issue of this magazine. We are indebted to Árni Óla and to the publishers of the *Lesbók* for their cooperation.

When this project was under advisement it received encouragement from leading men in Iceland such as Dr.

Helgi Briem, Bishop Sigurgeir Sigurðsson, Árni G. Eylands and others. But a very special stimulus was provided on the occasion of the visit of Hon. Thor Thors to Winnipeg. He gave this supplement to personal visits his whole hearted support and said that such exchanges of thought and information were bound to arouse interest and should lead to study and actual visits.

The next article to appear in Iceland will be by a man in Winnipeg who has a keen appreciation of Icelandic poetry and who will write in the Icelandic language. More personal and subjective articles are needed but also others which are objective in content. The following come to one's mind: sketches with photographs of historic places and monuments such as *Iðavöllur* near Hnaua, the park at Gimli, the cairns that have been erected in many of the Icelandic districts. Somebody should cover the Icelandic organizations which mean so much to us all and which are but the outward expression of what we feel within ourselves no matter what the stage of our individual integration into the Canadian or American scene may be.

We are lagging behind Rev. Hallgrímsson in this exchange project. In his last letter he states that the following will soon be ready: the Youth Movement in Iceland by Þorsteinn Einarsson; the First Icelandic Aircraft by Dr. Alexander Jóhannesson, the university rector; the First Icelandic Broadcast, by Lárus Jóhannesson, supreme court barrister; New Methods in Education by Helgi Eliasson, Director of Education. Other subjects that occur to us are: the heating system in Reykjavík; the special features of natural scenery in Iceland; the farm home, Icelandic horses and sheep etc.

This exchange of thoughts and feel-

ings, of facts and information, has its reward not only as an educational process but in the interest which it is bound to create. It may lead to a renewed determination to hold fast to all that can be preserved.

One thing we must not forget. If, in the service we render in this land as Canadians and Americans we give of our best, we are helping to perpetuate what is best in our inheritance.

Mrs. Franklin Roosevelt says that the

people of the democracies must live democracy. We, who came from that island in the Northern seas must live and make part of ourselves the spirit which maintained our forebears during centuries of tribulations and enabled our people to make such a valuable contribution to Western culture. We need to know the people of Iceland and they us. That is why we should preserve and strengthen all the bonds.

W. J. Lindal



Recent Icelandic Canadian Authors

Following is a list of some of the titles appearing on the book market here during the last four years. A few of these have been published in Iceland, but all are works of Icelandic Canadians.

In English:

- Iceland's Thousand Years (1945, reprint 1946).
- Lutherans In Canada, by Rev. V. J. Eylands, B.A., B.D. (1945).
- Viking Heart, Laura G. Salverson (reprint, 1948).
- Confessions Of An Immigrant's Daughter, Laura G. Salverson (reprint, 1949).
- Canadian Citizenship, by W. J. Lindal (1946).
- Wings Of The Wind (Poems), by Albert L. Halldorson (1948).

In Icelandic:

- Saga Íslendinga í Vesturheimi, Vol. III, Þ. Þ. Þorsteinsson (1945).
- Björninn úr Bjarmalandi, Þ. Þ. Þorsteinsson (1945).

Kviðlingar og kvæði, (Poems), K. N. Julius (1945).

Á Heiðarbrún, (Poems), by Dr. S. E. Bjornson (1945).

Sólheimar, (Poems), by E. P. Jonsson (1944).

Dagshríðar spor, (12 short stories) by Guðrún H. Finnsdóttir (1946).

Rit og ræður, by Dr. Jón Bjarnason (1946).

Ljóðmæli, (Poems) by Rev. Jónas A. Sigurðsson (1946).

Skilarétt, (Poems) by Páll S. Pálsson (1947).

Eldflugur, (Poems) by Vigfús J. Guttormsson (1947).

Heildarverk (Collected Works) of J. M. Bjarnason (1947).

Poems, by Bjarni Thorsteinsson (1948).

Heildarverk (Collected Works) of Guttormur J. Guttormsson (1948).

Bréf og Ritgerðir (Vol. IV), Stephan G. Stephansson (1948).

In Icelandic and English:

- Lundar Diamond Jubilee (1948).

Early Historic Glimpses of Icelandic People in Winnipeg

By J. J. Bildfell

In my discourse before the members of this club last year, on the subject of the activities of the early Icelandic people in Winnipeg, I enumerated some of the more important historical facts concerning them from the time they arrived in Winnipeg, in 1875, up to the end of the year, 1882. Unfortunately, I was obliged to leave the Icelandic people in Winnipeg, the city, and the New West under an ominous and threatening cloud.

Tonight it is my pleasant privilege to dispel that cloud and allay the fear it caused among the Icelandic people in Winnipeg, the people of this city at large, and the people of the New West, at least to some extent. The cloud rested still heavily on the shoulders of those who had lost their all in the collapse of the boom as far as the outside property in Winnipeg was concerned, and among them were a number of Icelandic people. However, the value of central or close-in properties in Winnipeg had not been materially affected.

There was considerable activity both in vacant and improved properties during the year 1883 in Winnipeg. The old Court House and the jail, were located at the corner of Main Street and William Avenue, on land bought for \$35,000.00. This land was sold for \$65,000.00, and a new court house and jail were built on Kennedy Street where both buildings are still utilized. Building of a new city hall on the former court house site was started in 1883, and the first Parliament Building, on Broadway, was begun. The St. John's Ladies College, and several other buildings of

note were also being erected or completed.

There were numerous important services inaugurated in Winnipeg during the year 1883, such as Surrogate Court Services, Postal Delivery Service, and Fire Protection Service.

West from Winnipeg, from men working on the Canadian Pacific Railway, came stories about vast stretches of prairie, lying north, east, west and south, as far as man could see, rich in luxurious growth, over which the buffalo, deer and antelope roamed at leisure; extensive forests teeming with fur-bearing animals and other forest life, rivers and lakes where various kinds of palatable fish abounded. A vast empire waited for the plough, reaper and axeman, the fisherman and the homebuilder. This welcome news travelled fast, far and wide, and the people came from south, east and beyond the seas in thousands. Practical farmers from the south with their implements and stock, merchants, financiers and business people from the east, and people with indomitable will power, hope and courage, from beyond the sea. A total of 50,000 people came to the New West during the year 1883.

This influx of people, naturally, had a stimulating and stabilizing effect on Winnipeg which was sorely needed after the shake-up and shock that the collapse of the boom had caused.

The population of the City of Winnipeg had increased to 62,360 persons, the school population to 7000, and the school attendance to 4,519, yet things at the beginning of the year 1883 were

rather unsettled in Winnipeg. Work was not overly plentiful in the City. Money was locked up in real estate, and scarce, and there was considerable idleness.

Wages paid to those who had work were from \$1.75 to \$2.00 per day of 10 hours, which netted \$45-50 per month provided that no time was lost. The prevailing rent for a 3-4 room house was \$4-5 per week, and proportionately higher for bigger and better houses. Prices of other necessities of life were moderate — beef 15-20 cents a pound, mutton 20-25 cents, butter 30 cents, firewood \$5.50 to \$10.00 per cord, the latter price for hardwood. Board for a week at the Icelandic boarding houses was \$4-4.50.

With this inordeum, or introduction, I wish to revert to the Icelandic colony in Winnipeg.

At the beginning of the year 1883, the Icelandic colony in Winnipeg consisted of 754 persons, 300 married, 207 unmarried women, 179 unmarried men, 53 children born in this country, 85 boys under 15 years of age. There were 12 dressmakers, 12 merchants, 10 carpenters, 5 organists, 4 printers, 3 painters and 1 blacksmith.

The general economic condition of these people was not rosy. Many of them had participated in the activities of the Icelandic Investment Company, whose operations were principally confined to what were then called the outlying districts, and which then, as always, suffered most severely in the collapse of the boom, and were badly hampered financially. Some of them lost all they had, even to the meagre furnishings of their houses. Others who were not saddled with any speculative responsibility, fared better, although it is undoubtedly true that the

year 1883 augured a dull and doubtful prospect as far as the economical prospect of the members of the little Icelandic colony was concerned.

It has been established, I think, without any doubt, that the spiritual activities of the Icelandic people are not dependent on their economic conditions, and while it could not properly be said that the members of the Icelandic colony in Winnipeg were spiritually active during the greatest part of the year 1883, it would be equally unfair to say that they were inactive, or even dormant. The Icelandic Society was alive and operating under the leadership of Baldvin L. Baldvinson, as President, Sigurbjörn Stefánsson as Vice-President, Sveinn Björnsson, Secretary (Treasurer), Eyjólfur Eyjólfsson, Librarian, J. Jónsson (Björnsson), Sergeant-at-arms Bjarni Jónsson. — The members in good standing were 23.

There were two main questions that agitated the minds of the members of the Society during the winter of 1883. First, the so-called house question, i. e. whether to build a new hall, or add on to the old one which now was getting too small to meet the requirements. Some advocated sale of the old hall, buying land and building a new one of sufficient size to meet the growing demands, and others, under the sponsorship of W. H. Paulson wanted to build an addition to the old house. In connection with the selling and building idea, the sponsors went so far as to have expert valuation made of the saleable assets of the Society which proved to be little over \$2,000.00 which amount fell far short of paying for a new building and land. After numerous verbal encounters at the meetings of the Society, the addition idea was adopted, and the addition made, which added extensively to the seating capacity of the house,

besides providing considerable stage space.

The other mature question that still agitated the members of the Society was the Newspaper question. They, and many Icelanders outside of the Society felt keenly the need of newspapers in the Icelandic language as the Icelandic population was rapidly increasing, not only in Winnipeg, but in the country on both sides of the boundary line. However, no action was taken.

During the winter, 1883, the Society sponsored a school for the purpose of teaching English and the rudimental principles of education, under the principalship of Magnus Paulson.

In my discussion of this same subject last year, I mentioned the organization of the Ladies' Association. While this Association was not an integral part of the Icelandic Society, many members were also members of the Society and worked in close and harmonious connection with it. Most of the activities of the Ladies' Association during 1883 were confined to alleviating sufferings. Particularly was this true in connection with people arriving from Iceland without means. At the end of the immigration season of 1883, the following letter was addressed to the Association by Wm. C. H. Graham, Commissioner of Immigration in Winnipeg:

"Allow me to express my most sincere thanks to the Icelandic Ladies' Association in Winnipeg for the generosity and hospitality you have shown your compatriots who have arrived here, from Iceland, this Summer.

The beautiful example that you have set, and in truth, all the older Icelandic inhabitants of this City, should be an awakening to those who are blessed with this world's

riches. Such generosity and sisterly consideration for the welfare of the new-comers must create a warm sentiment and cheerful hope concerning their future in this country and will go far in compensating them for the sorrow they must have felt in leaving the land of their Fathers even though that land be cold and barren."

The officers of the Icelandic Ladies' Association in Winnipeg, were at that time:

Kristrún Ólafsdóttir, Chairman
Sigríður Jónsdóttir (Björnson), Vice-Chairman
Hólmfríður Guðmundsóttir, Secretary
Guðný Jónsdóttir (Björnson), Asst. Secretary
Kristrún Sveinungadóttir, Treasurer
Helga Gísladóttir, Asst. Treasurer

The Oriental Literary Society

You cannot find any community of Icelanders without finding among them literary men, poets, writers, historians, story tellers, and story writers. The little Icelandic colony in Winnipeg was blessed with all of these. I dare not inflict a detailed description of each of these men upon you, but am obliged to mention some of them.

During the winter of 1883, a young man who had studied for some time at Thiel College in Pennsylvania, was staying in Winnipeg. His name was Björn S. Brynjólfsson, son of Brynjólfur Brynjólfsson from Skeggstöðum in Húnavatnssýsla in Iceland, brother of Skafti and Magnús Brynjólfsson, whom many of you will remember. Björn organized a Literary Society in Winnipeg among his countrymen, which bore the name of the Oriental Literary Society. It was a kind of semi-private

affair. The members of this association met at regular intervals during the winter months, but it held all meetings behind closed doors which did not meet with the approval of those who were not invited to join in the activities of the Society, or those who had refused to do so. They not only thought, but stated plainly that literary activities which had to be confined within four walls were not only peculiar, but funny, and they began to make up funny stories about it. Before the fun had gone many rounds the stories had developed into witchcraft. The members of the Society were forced into the open to defend themselves and their Society which they did at a public meeting at which Jón Runólfsson defended his fellow members and the Society as follows:

"We, the members present here tonight, have requested your presence for the purpose of explaining to you the aim and purpose of the Society which we organized a short time ago, both from an educational and moral point of view. We call the organization the Oriental Literary Society. If anyone here should be shaky about the meaning of the word Oriental we will endeavor to explain it thus: rising, shining, bright like the sun in the East. The other meaning of the word Oriental is Eastern, or from the East, which seems in full accord with the first name. All the great and beautiful things bestowed on humanity originated in the East. The Lord established the Garden of Eden in the East. The seat of knowledge and learning came in the beginning from the East. The immense spiral towers of Babylon, which have never been

surpassed in their grandeur, reared their heads to the sky in the East. The East was the home of the Greeks, Spartans, Phoenicians and the Romans. From these ancient historic nations, we in the West received our first spark of education and knowledge and it was in the east that the Star of Stars appeared, Christ, himself, whose life and light has been guiding beacon of the bewildered and lost humanity."

This was the first and last meeting held by the Oriental Literary Society. A careless attitude, senseless talk, and invidious irresponsibility, has destroyed many worthy objects.

One of the outstanding historical events of the year 1883 among the Icelandic people of Winnipeg and in America, was the appearance on the 5th of May of an Icelandic newspaper in Winnipeg, the newspaper *Leifur*. I have already pointed out that one of the mature questions dealt with by the Icelandic Society in Winnipeg was the newspaper question. Everybody felt the need for an Icelandic newspaper, but they also realized the difficulties, and almost insurmountable obstacles in the way, all but one man, Helgi Jónsson from Sandfelli in Skriðdal in Suður-Múlasýsla in Iceland. Helgi was a man of courage and undaunted will power, and what the others saw no way of accomplishing collectively, he undertook to do alone.

Helgi visited Iceland in 1881, after donating the lot on which the home of the Icelandic Society in Winnipeg was built, and stayed in Iceland for about six months. When he came back to Winnipeg he built, what was then called, and in truth was a large building on the south east corner of Spence St. and

(Continued on page 48)

Manitoba 'U' Sets Up Icelandic Chair

Authorizing the execution of a declaration of trust, the Board of Governors of the University of Manitoba Feb. 18, stated its undertaking to establish in the university a Chair of Icelandic Language and Literature.

The chair will be established upon the completion of an endowment fund, accumulation of which is now nearing realization.

University President A. H. S. Gillson said establishment of the chair has "for many years been the cherished hope of the founders."

Endowment of the chair will represent a gift to the university from the Icelandic community as a whole, and the list of donations and bequests to the fund includes contributions from citizens of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Ontario, and several United States centres.

Objective of the founders for the endowment of the chair and for the support of studies in Icelandic is \$200,000. Up to that time \$135,000 had been donated or promised, of which \$113,000 had been deposited with the university.

The University of Manitoba has agreed upon establishment of the chair, to create a Department of Icelandic and a professorship, and to maintain instruction in the subject on a basis comparable with that of other departments in the humanities.

In the United States and Europe, some 45 universities offer courses in Icelandic, and it is particularly fitting that the first chair to be established in Canada should find its place in Manitoba, generally regarded as the centre of Icelandic influence in North America.

The university is already in possession of an exceptionally fine library of Icelandic works, to which additions are made yearly of all books published in Iceland, as a gift of the Icelandic Government.

(The library of the University of Manitoba today contains more than 4,500 volumes of Icelandic books and journals.)

The introduction of courses of study and facilities for research in Icelandic will open up an opportunity for scholarly work in the university, from which may be anticipated important contributions in the field of literature and of comparative philology, particularly in the relationship of Icelandic to the English language.

The literature of Iceland is rich in poetry and prose. The late Lord Tweedsmuir, former governor-general of Canada, spoke of Icelandic as the "noblest literature ever produced by man," and said of the sagas "the Icelandic Sagas are among the chief work of human genius."

All the Winnipeg daily papers featured prominently the announcement about the establishment of the Chair and commented editorially, quoting from the notable speech of Lord Dufferin on his historic visit to Gimli in 1877, when he paid tribute to the people of Icelandic descent who had come to make their home in Canada and stated:

"I have not entered a single hut or cottage in the settlement which did not contain, no matter how bare its walls or scanty its furniture, a library of twenty or thirty volumes . . . I trust you will continue to cherish for all time the heart-stirring literature of

your nation, and that from generation to generation your little ones will continue to learn in your ancient sagas that industry, energy, fortitude, perseverance and stubborn endurance have ever been the characteristics of the noble Icelandic race."

Following are brief excerpts from the editorials:

Winnipeg Tribune: "The general public owes a deep debt of gratitude to leaders of the Icelandic community in Manitoba for carrying to fruition this accomplishment To gauge the importance of the announcement it is only necessary to realize that Winnipeg has the second largest Icelandic population in the world, ranking next to Reykjavik, the capital of Iceland. And, as everyone knows, the province of Manitoba has for many years been the centre of Icelandic culture for the North American continent. It is important that the rich strain of Icelandic literature and culture should not only be kept intact but encouraged in this new land by study and research such as can centre around a Department of Icelandic in the University of Manitoba."

Winnipeg Citizen: "The Icelandic Sagas are part of the heritage of civilization. The opportunity for advanced study of Icelandic culture, to be provided in Winnipeg, may be judged in the light of the fact that Icelandic is the only living classic language in the world today. Classical Greek and Latin are gone, except in written record and in limited use for special purposes. Of course, Icelandic is not solely a classical nor a medieval language. It flourishes as the medium of modern literature as well. Iceland is a home of parliamentary democracy and the study of

Icelandic will strengthen and preserve the ideals which have sustained mankind in its long march upwards from the misty past."

The Winnipeg Free Press: "The Department of Icelandic being established at the University of Manitoba should serve to create a more general awareness of the history, traditions and literature of one of the great peoples of the world. It will be available for specialist studies by post-graduates as well as for the work of undergraduates. In the same way the new department should give a sense of fresh perspective to the history of medieval Europe and the growth of European polity. For these saga folk have wandered far from their northern mists and they have been pioneers in the world of thought no less than seekers after distant horizons on land and sea."

Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson, who heads the Founders' committee has received scores of congratulatory letters from presidents and language professors of universities all over America. Among these should be mentioned our closest neighbors, the Universities of Saskatchewan, Grand Forks, and Toronto, and a special message from Dr. A. H. S. Gillson, president U. of Manitoba.

Yale, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Cornell, and in short most of the universities of Canada and many in the United States have expressed their great pleasure over the creation of the new department in Icelandic studies at the U of M. Dr. W. Kirkconnell writes from Acadia University, Nova Scotia and Sir William A. Craigie from England.

Two interesting paragraphs are here quoted from letters:

From Kemp Malone, Dept. of English, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore:

"As Professor of English, I can bear witness to the importance of Icelandic studies for workers in the English field. My own scholarly career would have been impossible without the knowledge of Icelandic which I was able to obtain by a year's residence in Iceland. The literature of Old and Middle English cannot be studied with full success without some acquaintance with Icelandic literature, and a knowledge of the Icelandic language is indispensable to every successful student of the history of the English language. In other words, the new chair at the University of Manitoba will be an asset of the first importance to the English department, in addition to the importance it will have in its own right."

From Lee M. Hollander, Prof of Germanic languages and literature, University of Texas:

"This Chair will not only be a living and lasting memorial to the idealism

of those Icelanders who have prospered in Canada, but it will serve to encourage the coming generations to cherish and to study the language and literature of their forefathers and thus immeasurably enrich their lives and the culture they reside in. . . . May I presume to add, as one who has an abiding faith in the printed word, (as what Icelfander has not?) that the beneficial effects of this Chair will be multiplied manifold if the endowment makes ample provision for the publication and dissemination of monographs and journals, both scientific and popular, devoted to the cultural aspects of Icelandic history both old and new."

The press release issued by the University of Manitoba when announcing the establishment of the chair closes with these words:

"The endowment of the chair in the university will represent an outstanding extension of the studies available to Canadian students and a further notable contribution to Canadian culture from the Icelandic community."

News comes from Vancouver that the hockey career of Frank Fredrickson "one of the game's greatest players", has come to an end.

He was a top-notchcr from the age of five when he first put on skates in his father's backyard rink in 1900. He stepped into senior hockey at the age of 17, and captained the Falcons (Icelandic players) in 1919-20 when the team won the Olympic crown for Canada.

His professional career started with Victoria Aristocrats, and teams he played with captured one Stanley Cup and figured in the finals for two more.

"Fearless Frank", also figured in some of the biggest swaps of the early National Hockey League. Detroit traded him to Boston Bruins for Duke Keats and Gordon (Red) Brydon. Then hockey's well known Mickey McKay together with the small sum of \$10,000 brought Frank from Boston to the Pittsburgh Pirates, where he was manager-playing coach in 1930 until a knee injury stopped him.

Now Fredrickson is retiring as coach of the University of British Columbia Thunderbirds and from active participation in hockey.

The Beothucks of Newfoundland

By Svanhvit Josie

The current interest in Newfoundland, soon to become Canada's tenth province, brings to mind the remarkable and little-known story of the original inhabitants of that island who lived there isolated and undisturbed for several centuries. They were the Beothucks, whose story has no parallel in the history of the colonization of America. It is of particular interest to us who are of Icelandic descent.

The origin of these people is still in dispute. Many writers refer to them as Indians, but learned students of the subject including the Late Mr. Cormack, founder of the Beothuck Institute and the late Bishop Mulock of St. John's were convinced that they were either remnants of an old Icelandic colony or a mixture of the early Icelandic settlers with the natives found in Newfoundland by Viking explorers. Mr. Cormack made a study of everything relating to their manners, customs, language, etc. He pointed out the possible European origin of their language and said it possessed all the European sounds and it bore no resemblance to languages of North American Indian tribes. However, other students have denied that the Beothuck language resembled Icelandic at all.

In any case the Beothucks lived so long separated from their ancient stock as well as from all mankind that they had come to differ widely in many particulars from all other nations. Later explorers described them as unlike Indians encountered on the mainland in that they were white when young, although they grew weatherbeaten and

dark in color with age. Their traits of character, language etc. remained distinctive to the last. So far as can be learned, they passed out of existence within the first half of the 19th century.

Early in the 11th century Thorfinnur Karlsefni and his party visited Markland (now thought to be Newfoundland). There they encountered natives whom they called skrælings. From the visit of Thorfinnur until the re-discovery of America by Columbus in 1492 the historic record is vague.

A few years after Columbus the Cabots, father and son, starting from England, visited both Labrador and Newfoundland. On their first visit to Newfoundland they did not meet any inhabitants. The natives probably fled to the woods on the stranger's approach. But there was ample proof of their existence in felled trees and other evidence of human labor. It was on their second voyage to Newfoundland in 1498 that the Cabots discovered these aboriginal people who for nearly three and a half centuries continued to occupy this oldest British colony until "civilization" blotted them out of existence.

The Cabots brought three natives away from Newfoundland and presented them to King Henry VII in 1499. The following year some Portuguese voyagers also returned home with captive natives, and French papers report that in 1509 a French ship carried "some savages from that island which is called Newfoundland." Cartier met with the aborigines in the island in 1534.

In 1583 Sir Humphrey Gilbert, provided with letters patent from Queen Elizabeth, arrived in the Harbor of St. John's to take possession of the island for the Crown of England. But it was not until the early 17th century that England decided it would be advantageous to colonize Newfoundland. Then a company of nobles and gentlemen was permitted to form the "Council and Co. of the Newfoundland Plantation." This company received a charter from James I. One of the hopes of the British government in granting wide powers to the new Company was "the conversion of the people of these partes, if any there be, unto the true worship of God, and Christian religion &c." In 1610 Mr. John Guy was sent out by the company to take charge of the settlement.

The first meeting of company officials with the natives was friendly. James P. Howley, the authority, states that, "The bold, fearless confidence which —(they)— displayed, proved that they had not been tampered with before and that their natural disposition when fairly treated, was one of trust and friendliness" After this first meeting, at which the Englishmen and the natives exchanged their best food and enjoyed it together, and also did some trading, it was finally understood between them that a similar meeting would take place at the same time and place the following year. The natives gathered on the spot as arranged, but unfortunately a fishing ship came along, and seeing the group assembled on the shore, the fishermen decided that the natives were about to attack. The ship thereupon fired a cannon charge among the Beothucks who scattered and ran into the woods. It is presumed that the Beothucks mistook the newcomers for the same parties

whom they had previously met, and owing to the supposed treachery they were never again induced to have any dealings with the settlers.

The Rev. Moses Harvey wrote in the *Maritime Monthly Magazine* of June, 1875, "The savages, at first mild and tractable and disposed to maintain friendly relations, became at length the fierce and implacable foe of the white man; and sternly refused all overtures for peaceable intercourse, when at length such offers were made by a humane government. . . . Bows, arrows and clubs could avail little against the firearms of the white man; and gradually their numbers thinned; they were driven from the best hunting ground — grounds where for centuries their forefathers had trapped the beaver and pursued the reindeer; war, disease and hunger thinned their ranks; and now not a single representative of the red race of Newfoundland is known to be in existence."

During the 17th and 18th centuries the Beothucks warred with the English. The tendency of the poor natives to appropriate small articles such as hooks, lines, knives, axes etc. was made an excuse for the most barbarous cruelties and wholesale slaughter by the fishermen. But an even worse fate overtook them when the semi-civilized Micmacs from Cape Breton and Nova Scotia found their way across the gulf and invaded their territory. The Micmacs, armed with deadly weapons procured from the French in Acadia, infiltrated the interior and attacked the aborigines who became hemmed in on all sides. The Beothucks, of course, had no chance against such overwhelming odds. There is reliable information that they were "wilfully destroyed, being hunted down like wild animals."

It was natural that when an opport-

unity presented itself the poor natives would retaliate. Yet, according to Mr. Howley, the instances of their having done so are few and of a very doubtful nature.

At long last the government decided it was time to put a stop to the inhuman barbarities practised on the defenceless Beothucks. In 1768 the then Governor, Sir Hugh Palliser, sent out Lieut. John Cartright in charge of an expedition to try to establish friendly relations with them. Cartright reported, "There are traditions among the English inhabitants of Newfoundland, which prove that an amicable intercourse once subsisted between them and the natives; and at the same time afford sufficient evidence that the conduct of the savages was not the cause that those social bonds were broken."

His Excellency Capt, the Hon. John Byron, grandfather of the great poet, succeeded Palliser in 1769. He was shocked at the barbarous treatment of the natives, and commanded the magistrates to apprehend persons guilty of murdering them so that they could be tried by the laws of England. This proclamation was re-issued by Commodore Robert Duff, Governor, in 1775 and again by Rear Admiral Montague in 1776. During the last quarter of the 18th century several leading men in Newfoundland continued to press for more humane treatment of the natives. Prominent among these men was Mr. John Bland who wrote to the Governor in 1790 that, "It ought to be remembered that these savages have a natural right to this island and every invasion of a natural right is a violation of the principle of justice." Seven years later he said, "I have heard Mr. Cartright declare that he had always found them more deserving of confidence than his own countrymen."

Lieut. John Cartright relates how a Beothuck woman was shot by fishermen in August, 1768, and her baby kidnapped. The following winter the child was exposed as a curiosity at Poole for paid admission. Capt. George Cartright, John's brother, who was also much concerned with the fate of this sad race, wrote of the Beothucks in letters covering the period 1770 to 1786, "In my opinion they are the most forlorn of any of the human species which have yet come to my knowledge, the Indians of Terra del Fuego excepted, for these are not only excluded from intercourse with the rest of mankind, but are surrounded by inveterated enemies, and not even possessed of the useful services of the dog. . . . I am sorry to add that the latter (English fishermen) are much greater savages than the Indians themselves for they seldom fail to shoot the poor creatures whenever they can, and afterwards boast of it as a very meritorious action. With horror I have heard several declare that they would rather kill an Indian than a deer."

The efforts of the Cartright brothers and others with humanitarian instincts were not entirely wasted. In 1810 Governor Sir John Thomas Duckworth, K.C.B. issued a Proclamation to the inhabitants of Newfoundland offering a reward of £100 to anyone who should "zealously and meritoriously exert himself to bring about and establish on a firm and settled footing an intercourse with the natives." The proclamation of 1810 showed a considerable change in attitude from that of a few years earlier which offered a reward by Government House for the capture of a Red Indian alive. The records show that a reward of £50 was actually paid in 1803 to a fisherman who seized a young girl out alone in a canoe, and

brought her to the capital. It is also recorded, however, that the captor promised to return her to the spot where she was found.

But the cruelties were not yet ended. One of the saddest stories told of the Beothucks was the capture on March 5, 1819 of Demasduit (renamed Mary March), a young married woman of 23 whose husband, a tribal chief, was killed in trying to prevent her capture. Mary March left a young child which died a couple of days after it was deprived of both parents, and she herself died of consumption on board ship on January 8, 1820, before she could be returned to her tribe.

Mary March was described as "quite unlike an Esquimau in face and figure, tall and rather stout in body, limbs very small and beautifully formed, and of these she was very proud; her complexion a light copper colour, became nearly as fair as a European's after a course of washing, and absence from smoke, her hair black, which she delighted to comb and oil, her eyes larger and more intelligent than those of an Esquimau, her teeth small, white and regular, her cheek bones rather high but her countenance had a mild and pleasing expression. Her voice was remarkably sweet, low and musical."

Three years after the death of Mary March two nieces of her husband were captured, along with their mother. The mother and the older sister were not well, and after a short period of captivity it was decided to return all three to their native haunts. They were released near the place of capture, but they wandered aimlessly without meeting any of their tribe until finally they found their way back to English habitation. The mother and her sick daughter soon died, but the younger

girl, Shanawdithit (renamed Nancy) lived for a few years, and she became known as the last of the Beothucks. Nancy was described as "a well-grown woman with beautiful features, splendid teeth and a happy disposition." She was taken into a St. John's household where she served as a maid until 1828. Then the Beothuck Institute accepted responsibility for her for the remaining nine months of her life.

Among the many persons who made gallant attempts to ameliorate the conditions of the helpless Beothucks was Mr. W. E. Cormack, a fine Scottish gentleman who was born in Newfoundland. He died in New Westminster, B. C. about 1877 after making two daring excursions into the then unknown interior of the island in the hope of communicating with the Beothucks. But it was too late. For forty years Mr. James P. Howley made a careful study of all possible sources of information concerning these unfortunate people. Mr. J. R. Smallwood, who has been the chief spokesman for Newfoundland in the negotiations with Canada, says that Howley's book, **The Beothucks**, "stands today in company with a few brittle bones and rusty implements as the only memorial to a brave and intelligent race obliterated by the cruelty of the white man."

Mr. Howley believed that some day further information would perhaps come to light to solve the riddle as to the origin of the Beothucks. So far the question has not been settled. Whether or not there was any of our own Nordic blood in these people we share Mr. Howley's hope that the tired Beothucks are now enjoying peace and rest, both of which were denied them on earth.

The Vikings Come to Iroquois Falls

By Holmfridur Danielson

Parents and other visitors agreed that the Icelandic exhibit arranged by Grade 6 of Iroquois Falls public school was the most interesting project presented this year for Parents' Day, which was held during Education Week in November.

Now, how could the pupils of a school in a remote paper-mill town in northern Ontario arrange an Icelandic exhibit? What do they know about Iceland and where did they get the necessary material?

The answers to these questions is a very interesting and inspiring story.

Iroquois Falls is situated on the townsite of the Abitibi Power and Paper Co., which has plants scattered throughout some twelve towns in northern Manitoba and Ontario. The town has an excellently equipped school and highly qualified teachers who hold Supervisors' certificates teach Art and Music throughout all the classrooms, as well as having regular classes of their own.

The Ontario Programme of Studies for public schools contends, "that a child develops by virtue of his own activity". Therefore the classroom enterprise is greatly encouraged, where the children may plan and participate in a variety of projects which arouse their interest, develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge and shape their attitudes to humanity in general. Some excellent educational projects have been executed at Iroquois Falls, by the pupils with guidance of their teachers. Through some of these enterprises the children have studied the contribution made by various ethnic groups to Canadian culture.

Through her association with the Editor and circulation manager of the **Icelandic Canadian**, one of the teachers at Iroquois Falls had become intensely interested in Icelandic history and culture. She is Miss Marion Henderson, Grade 6 teacher and music supervisor in the school. She had read and studied all books on the subject available to her, and last September she decided to interest her class in putting on an "Icelandic project" for Education Week.

"There is time for one or perhaps two such elaborate educational projects in each classroom during the year," says Miss Henderson, "but first the children have to be inspired to such a degree of curiosity and enthusiasm that they are willing to accept the extra work in reading, research, picture making, interviews, letter writing and rehearsals. I like to explore a new field each time and during the last few years at Iroquois Falls, grade 6 or 7 has developed enterprises depicting: Pioneers of Old Ontario; Spanish Conquest of Mexico; The Pueblo Indians; Puppet Shows of Tom Sawyer and Robin Hood; and a marionette Clown Show to inspire playwriting. And following the Icelandic project will be one on the French Canadians, our neighbors on the East.

"And how did my class become such ardent investigators of Iceland and Icelandic Canadians?" continues Miss H. "Well, you know how the teacher became inspired with the idea! It was a simple matter to wait for an opportunity to arise in class, seize it and sprinkle salt on its tail! We had been reviewing grade 5 Social Studies, and had just

finished a geography lesson comparing the East and West Indies."

"Who discovered America?" asked the teacher, casually. That was easy, thought the class, It was Columbus of course! But wait, — last year the teacher had said, — now what was it — they could not quite remember! They were watching their teacher and they leaned forward eagerly as she opened a drawer in her desk and brought out a quaint little boat. It was only eight inches long, but perfect in every detail, with two little coloured sails, a dragon-head prow, tiny shields around the gun-wales and fine tread-like rigging.

The Vikings had come to Iroquois Falls, Ontario and they sailed right into the imagination of every member of the class.

From then on the teacher and pupils entered into their Icelandic project with a thoroughness and patience which seems astonishing. For more than two months every contact and source of information was diligently explored and pieced together into a fascinating pattern. To begin with Miss Henderson wrote on the black-board the names of all printed source material available. These were divided among the pupils and later each child contributed oral composition in class

on whatever angle had been assigned for individual study.^o

From her friends in Winnipeg the teacher received pictures, articles and the names of Icelandic-Canadian children in Manitoba schools. To these the grade 6 pupils wrote letters and received answers. Says Miss H. "It was a good-will contact with Canadians like ourselves whose roots had flourished in the soil of a land akin to us, hut not our own!" The children have also received from the **Icelandic Canadian** the names of several young students in Iceland, who desire to enter into correspondence with Canadians.

The children brought to class little stories of their ancestors in Norway. Sweden and Denmark. Maps recorded the restless adventurings and steady progress of the sea rovers toward the West. Iceland's geography and history were scrutinized and the children given a glimpse of the Golden Age of literature. Folk tales which had been told to children in Iceland and in Greenland as far back as 998 A. D. became the **Sagas** of little modern skalds in Iroquois Falls.

Under the supervision of the Bulletin Board director — himself a pupil, — pictures of the Vikings, of Icelandic scenery, and of Icelanders in N. Amer-

^o Source material and study-plan for the Icelandic project at Iroquois Falls school.

A. Unrolling the maps — Discovery of America — the Vikings: Gunnbjorn, Eric the Red, Bjarne, Herjulf, Leif Ericson.

B. Library reference: 1. Iceland in Story and Picture (Bailey & Weise); 2. Book of Knowledge, Books 1, 11, 13, 14; 3. Iceland (V. Stefnaasson); 4. National Geographic pictures (1939 file); 5. Mankind Throughout the Ages (Rugg, Kruger); 6. The Great Sea Dragon (Hultz); 7. Canada's Story (Marshall); 8. Famous Canadian Stories (French); 9. Discoverers and Explorers of North America (Homer-Jackson); 10. Pathfinders of N. America (Guillet); 11. Iceland's Thousand Years; 12. Icelandic Folk Songs (words and music borrowed from H. D.); 13. Icelandic Canadian Magazine (16 articles and poems on Icelandic history and culture, and on Icelandic descendants and their activities in America).

C. Sound Film — Iceland, Land of the Vikings.

D. Collecting and arranging of Icelandic exhibits by pupils. Exchange of letters with Icelandic-Canadian students.

E. Supplementary reading by teacher: **Golden Hair** (S. Arason).

F. Rehearsing Icelandic folk song for Parents Day.

ica were attractively grouped on the board for reference during the frequent discussions.

Leif Ericson emerged as a Viking hero and the class was entranced with the idea that the Yarmouth Stone found in Minnesota was considered to be his enduring American calling-card.

It was a great day when grade 6 learned that Ontario also had been visited by the Vikings. "They had been here!" Pictures and stories explained the discovery made at Beardmore, Ont., near Lake Nipigon when a battle-axe, sword and shield-brass of a Viking warrior were unearthed and transferred to the Royal Museum in Toronto. In the *Icelandic Canadian* they could read an article about it written by their own teacher, Miss Henderson.

The teacher then took her pupils on an imaginary trip to Winnipeg to introduce them to "those modern Vikings of the West who have become a part of Canada, and who are one with us," she said, "in making this north-land a nation. They are contributing democratic ideals not only to the Canadian west but to the central United States as well. They are eager to share with us the rich cultural heritage of their homeland which knows no illiteracy."

All this and much more the teacher told her pupils and showed them articles and pictures in the *Icelandic Canadian* depicting activities of the descendants of the Icelanders in this country. The happy result was that, "Here is one class of children who appreciate the contribution that Icelanders are making to help us evolve a truly Canadian culture someday," writes Miss Henderson.

The lessons and discussions were kept up throughout the fall term, and at the conclusion of each, the teacher

read for the class a chapter from Stein-grimur Arason's *Golden Hair*, a story about a little girl in Iceland. She has promised the boys that she will later read *Smoky Bay*, by the same author.

As Education Week approached grade 6 began making their final arrangement of the Icelandic exhibit, on the large bulletin board which has a miniature stage in the centre. On this stage the children created a scene depicting *Leifur Eiriksson* approaching the shores of America, using the tiny Viking ship model brought from Norway last summer by the mother of one of the pupils.

Flanking this scene were maps of Northern Europe, Iceland, Greenland and N. America; the Icelandic flag, pictures of Icelandic scenery, Icelandic industry and arts; pictures of Icelanders' activities in America, such as the Icelandic celebration at Gimli, Man.; the "Fjallkona", and other Icelandic costumes; Icelandic dramatic activities. There were also pictures of the Kensington Stone and the Beardmore Weapons.

All these exhibits and a great many more were inspected by the visitors on Parents Day, and the children were eager to answer questions about Iceland, asked by the adults. Finally they sang for the audience an Icelandic folk song "*Sólskríkjan*", in an English translation. It was with a pleasant sense of achievement that the grade 6 pupils came to the close of this special Parents Day at Iroquois Falls.

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The pupils at Iroquois Falls are keeping up their contacts with their Manitoba correspondents of Icelandic descent, who exchanged Valentines with them; and now the February issue of their class magazine, called "Our Gang Magazine", has been sent to the

editor of the **Icelandic Canadian**. The magazine, a thick book of foolscap size pages with a red Art-paper cover, having elegant Valentine decorations, is another worth while project handled by the children themselves, all departments being edited by pupils. It contains the children's best efforts in composition, some fine crayon drawings, pictures illustrating literature lessons, jokes, poems, and news on special activities in the school.

The teacher writes: "For the last three years the monthly magazine has been sent to the Sick Children's Hospital in Toronto, but since you have figured so highly in our Icelandic studies and since our editorial is directed

to our friends of Icelandic descent, we decided to send you the magazine so that you could have a little visit with us. Will you please send it on to Ron, Arthur and Heida Joanne", (their Manitoba correspondents).

This Icelandic project was launched as a cultural enterprise and carried out by ten- and eleven year -old children, none of whom are of Icelandic descent. It could not have been accomplished but for the enthusiasm imparted to them by their teacher. How many adults of Icelandic descent are willing to put forth as much effort as did Miss Henderson so that our own descendants here may learn something of Icelandic history and culture?

Icelandic Girl at Lucia Festival



Asa Gudjohnsen

Robed in white fur and wearing a crown of lighted candles Asa Gudjohnsen rode along Stockholm's streets last December 13, and was hailed as the Queen of Light by hundreds of thousands of its citizens.

Asa was the choice of descendants of Scandinavians in Seattle, Wash., to represent them at the traditional Lucia Festival in Sweden. In the magnificent retinue of twenty vehicles there were two Lucias — Stockholm's own Queen, and Seattle's Queen-messenger of goodwill and brotherhood, bearing greetings to the kinsmen in Sweden. In two flower-bedecked cars they led the procession and were accorded equal homage.

The Lucia Festival has its vague origin far back in antiquity. The story of a Christian maiden, Lucia, who supposedly died a martyr's death in 304 A.D., in Sicily, became interwoven with the legends of many lands and finally

Lucia came to be regarded as Queen of the spirits who appear on the longest night of winter to chase away the darkness.

Twenty years ago in Sweden, a daily newspaper, **The Sockholm Tidningen**, sponsored the first Lucia Festival, the first Queen being the wife of the famous singer, Jussi Björling.

Last year the newspaper Seattle Post, decided to sponsor a Lucia contest, the winner to fly to Sweden as good-will messenger to reign for a day with Sweden's own Lucia. The contest attracted wide attention, and the happy winner, Asa Gudjohnsen, like a veritable Spirit of Light, was borne through the air to her destination across the Atlantic. She carried messages from Seattle officials to such dignitaries as the Mayor of Stockholm, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, and even a letter to the King himself.

While in Stockholm she had the plea-

sure of dining with the Crown Prince, Gustaf Adolf, and was daily featured in the newspapers and radio news, not only as the Queen of Light from Seattle, but also as the charming Icelandic girl, Asa Gudjohnsen.

Asa is 22 years old and a student at the University of Washington where she is specializing in journalism. She is a daughter of the late Baldur Gudjohnsen, who came from Húsavík, Iceland, and his wife Salome (Ólafsdóttir) from Múla in Kollafjörður, Iceland. Asa's great-grandfather was Pétur Guðjohnsen, organist, and sometimes referred to as **the father** of music in Iceland. His daughter, Frú Lára Bjarnason, who came from Iceland in 1877 with her husband Rev. Jón Bjarnason, to serve the pioneers in New Iceland (Manitoba), was also a great music lover and is sometimes spoken of as **the mother** of music among the Icelandic pioneers here. **H. D.**

SALVERSON BOOK REPRINTED

Laura G. Salverson's autobiography, **Confession's of an Immigrant's Daughter**, is the Canadian Reprint Society's latest choice in its reprint series. The book was first published in England in 1939, and won the Governor-General's medal for non-fiction. Mrs. Salverson's novel **The Dark Weaver**, won the same award for fiction in 1937, and also a gold medal from the Paris Institute of Arts and Sciences in 1938.

Besides the autobiography, Mrs. Salverson has had published 8 novels, and a small volume of verse. Her first novel, **The Viking Heart**, (1923) appeared in a new edition last year.

Mrs. Salverson was born in Winnipeg, where she now resides, and is the

daughter of the late Larus and Ingibjorg Gudmundson.

★

Miss Betty Jane McKenty of Kappa Gamma Sorority was chosen most outstanding sorority woman on the campus Monday evening when the Pan Hellenic Association of the University of Manitoba held its third annual banquet and songfest in the Marlborough Hotel. She was awarded the Zeta Tau Alpha cup. The Award is made on the basis of academic record and extra-curricular activities. Miss McKenty is the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Jack McKenty 121 Girton Blvd. Her mother is the daughter of H. P. Tergesen of Gimli, Man.

The Chair of Icelandic Language and Literature

A statement of progress and an appeal for general financial support

During the past few weeks articles, editorials and letters have appeared in the Icelandic weekly and English daily papers of Winnipeg regarding the proposed Chair of Icelandic Language and Literature in the University of Manitoba. Editors of the three large daily news papers have published leading editorials on this subject. These statements must have stirred the heart of every Icelander on this continent who had an opportunity to read them. Government and University officials have congratulated and publicly thanked the Icelandic people for their generosity in providing funds for a department of Icelandic studies which, in their expressed opinion, will focus attention not only on the valuable contribution that this new department will make to the University and especially to the departments of English and Germanic languages, but also on the general cultural value of studies in Icelandic literature.

Similar communications have been received from several presidents of universities both in Canada and the United States. A significant statement in this regard is made in a letter from Dr. Sidney E. Smith, President of the University of Toronto: "It is fitting for obvious geographical and ethnical reasons, that The University of Manitoba should have a strong department of Icelandic Studies. Other Canadian universities will recognize that primacy and send to The University of Manitoba students who desire to share the wealth of Icelandic culture. The Chair will enable The University of Manitoba to conduct reasearch in comparative philology that will redound

to the benefit of Canadian scholarship."

His Excellency, Thor Thors, Minister from Iceland to the United States and Canada on a recent visit to Winnipeg to attend the 30th annual meeting of the Icelandic National League, spoke on several occasions about the great cultural link that would be established between the Icelandic people of the West and those of the homeland. In the course of his address to the convention, the Honorable Mr. Thors read messages from the President of Iceland, the Minister of Education, the Rector of the University, and the Bishop of Iceland on behalf of the Patriotic Society of Iceland congratulating the people of Icelandic descent in Canada and the United States, who have participated in the effort leading towards the establishment of the Chair of Icelandic in the University of Manitoba. Not only did the Minister speak in support of the project but associated himself with it by his personal contribution, thereby becoming with Icelanders in the United States and Canada, one of the Founders of the Chair.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the contributors to this fund are accomplishing at least three important objectives. They are re-affirming in a concrete manner their respect and admiration for their own cultural and literary heritage; they are placing on the highest university level a memorial to the courage and vision of the Icelandic pioneers of this great American continent, which Leifur Eiriksson, an Icelander, was the first European

to explore; and by this generous gift they are placing upon the University of Manitoba an obligation to maintain an active interest in Icelandic Arts and Letters.

There are those who have maintained that the University itself should establish the Chair without financial support from the Icelandic community. To these people it should be pointed out that the University has limited funds at its disposal, that there are urgent demands to increase and improve the facilities which it is already obligated to support and develop, and that even if such a step by the University had been possible, less enthusiasm would have been engendered by such an act.

The establishment of this department in the University of Manitoba is the culmination of the cherished hopes of the Icelandic pioneers and their descendants that an institution could be created which would persevere on this continent the finest in Icelandic culture, language and literature. In support of this idea, speeches and articles have been delivered and published throughout the intervening years by leading men and women of Icelandic descent. The movement has been greatly encouraged by public statements of such distinguished friends of the Icelandic people as the late Lord Dufferin, the late Lord Tweedsmuir and the Earl of Athlone, all of whom as Governors-General of Canada have visited the Icelandic lake settlements and addressed meetings at their main centre, Gimli.

This then, in brief, indicates the reason for the present upsurge of interest in this project and the wide general support it has received from individual contributors and the active co-operation given by the principal Ice-

landic organizations in America, with headquarters in Winnipeg. These organizations are: The Icelandic National League of America, with all its chapters; The Icelandic Canadian Club; the Icelandic Celebration Committee; The Icelandic Good Templars of Winnipeg; the Jon Sigurdson Chapter, I. O. D. E.; and, through their editors, the two Icelandic weekly newspapers and the Icelandic Canadian Magazine. In addition, the two Icelandic church groups are effectively represented by a number of their leading members on the sponsoring committee.

It is important to bring the foregoing facts into bold relief because they guarantee two important things: First, the success of the campaign for the raising of funds, and secondly, the continued interest of organizations and individuals in the promotion of Icelandic studies.

The University of Manitoba has announced through its President, Dr. A. H. S. Gillson, that on the completion of the present campaign for funds, it will establish a department of Icelandic Language and Literature under a professor with the same standing as that of other professors in the University. Two hundred thousand dollars is the objective which we must reach to ensure adequate financial support for the department. At the moment the sum of \$140,000.00 has been subscribed of which amount \$115,000.00 are on deposit with the University. The further sum of \$60,000 is required to reach our final objective. This, then, is the challenge which faces all of us who are interested in the ultimate success of this most worthy project.

It is the desire of the committee responsible for organizing the campaign that every Icelandic community will be represented in the following man-

ner: (1) The local organizations will themselves agree to collect \$1000.00 and thereby have the name of every such organization inscribed on the permanent record of the University, as a Founder organization. At the recent annual convention of the Icelandic National League, it set as its objective an additional sum of \$15,000.00. It is to be hoped that the executives of other organizations will also take the initiative in forming Founders' groups. (2) That certain individuals within these communities will themselves become Founders by contributing

\$1000.00 or more to the fund. (3) That families will combine to honor a parent by jointly contributing \$1000.00 or more. (4) That friends of outstanding leaders in each community will combine their donations to place such persons on the record as Founders, thereby honoring and perpetuating their names and in an effective manner giving recognition to their leadership and contribution to the community.

In the final record compiled by the University of Manitoba every individual donation will be duly recorded and acknowledged.

On behalf of the Icelandic Chair Committee

P. H. T. Thorlakson, M.D., chairman Margret Petursson, secretary

Form to be used in sending remittances

..... (Place)

..... (Date)

Mr. F. W. Crawford,
Comptroller, University of Manitoba,
Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Dear Sir:

I hereby offer to contribute the sum of One Thousand (\$1000.00) towards the fund for the establishment of a Chair in Icelandic Language and Literature in the University of Manitoba. I would like to pay this amount in yearly installments. A cheque for the first payment in the amount of \$. is herewith enclosed.

It is my understanding that if the Chair is not established by June 17th, 1952, this money will be returned to me.

Yours very truly,

Icelandic Canadian Club Becomes One of Founders

At the January meeting of the Icelandic Canadian club a resolution was passed to donate \$1000.00 to the Chair in Icelandic language and Literature at the University of Manitoba. This was made possible because the Icelandic Canadian Magazine committee

and the Book committee (Iceland's Thousand Years) offered to donate \$500.00 to this project. The balance of \$500.00 will be raised by individual subscription from members, who through the club, wish to be personally associated with this worthy project.

Helga Sigurdson Town Hall Recital

When Agnes Helga Sigurdson gave her town hall recital in New York, January 15, two New York dailies sent reviewers to cover the event. Their reviews follow. Ed.



Agnes Helga Sigurdson

Canadian Pianist Makes Local Debut in Town Hall Recital

Helga Sigurdson, Canadian pianist, made her debut at Town Hall Saturday night. Her assets proved to be an honest, unpretentious approach to the music at hand, strong, nimble fingers and considerable feeling for the flow of music.

The evening as a whole was pleasant. Miss Sigurdson, who has appeared in Canada and Iceland, played with serious intent, but failed to differentiate strongly the character of the various pieces. Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 101, had the same shapely but superficial quality as two Brahms Intermezzi and two short Chopin pieces.

Two Bach works, the Busoni arrangement of the beautiful Chorale prelude in F minor and the Pick-Mangiagalli Prelude in E. major, showed the young pianist in the extremes of her temperament. The first was

dark and restrained, the second almost xylophonic in its dash. She has the ability, but needs to develop deeper understanding of musical meanings.

—New York Times

C. H.

Helga Sigurdson, Pianist, Gives Town Hall Recital

Helga Sigurdson, who gave a Town Hall piano recital Saturday night, accomplished her best work in the weblike transition spanning the third and fourth movements of Beethoven's Sonata in A, Op. 101, the evening's only major offering. Miss Sigurdson's feeling for the slightly emphasized rubato is keenly musical and her treble tone rarely fails to sing. But in other portions of the sonata and in all save the final French group the pianist mistook loudness for vigor and haste for momentum.

The program also included the Bach-Busoni Chorale Prelude in F minor ("Ich ruf zu dir"), two intermezzi of Brahms, two Chopin pieces and short works by Faure, Satie, Ravel and Debussy.

Throughout the recital Miss Sigurdson displayed a strong, well founded technique and a source of power that stemmed not only from the fingers but the wrists and arms as well. This power, however, she often misused in pounding; fortissimo and its directly opposed pianissimo were the two levels upon which most of her performance depended. Dynamic grades between the two were rarely brought to play.

Happily Miss Sigurdson's equipment includes a grand array of bright, warm

colors and she used them all in her eminently poetic rendition of Ravel's "Une Barque sur l'Océan." But Beethoven's structural plan quite obviously baffled her, for she seemed unable to fit the composer's liquid phrases and

dense harmonic blocks into a definite formal pattern of her own. They were instead, explosively thrown down, and in this, isolated, pushed out of the structure as a whole. J. S. H.

—New York Herald Tribune

First Lady of Portage La Prairie



Mrs. Runa Garrett

Mrs. Runa Garrett, her full name is Guðrún Sigurlína, was selected First Lady of the year 1948 for the city of Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, in recognition of her distinguished service in the Canadian Red Cross work and other fields of social service in that city.

During the war years Mrs. Garrett directed the women's work of the Red Cross and was convener of the work rooms, a position she has held also since the war.

Mrs. Garrett is also known in many fields of endeavor. In addition to holding office in the Dorcas Society and the Eastern Star, and being an active

member of St. Mary's Anglican church L. A., every Thursday she devotes several hours of her time to social work at the Health Unit Clinic.

She is also active in sports. This year she was convener of the curling draws and played on the rink that won the Bonnie Sweeps' Cup and the Grand Challenge. Last year she won the Second Flight Golf Championship, presented by Sadie E. Hill.

In paying tribute to Mrs. Garrett's work, **The Daily Graphic** of Portage la Prairie says:

"The selection of Mrs. Garrett was made by a secret committee of citizens who spent several weeks considering a number of candidates.

"The committee named Mrs. Garrett for her outstanding work with the Portage branch of the Red Cross . . . Her unselfish devotion to Red Cross work lasted all through the war and has continued even since the war, when many patriotic people felt they had already done their duty . . . To this work she has given not hours but days and weeks of her time . . . and she does not appear to seek any publicity for the unselfish work she carries on day after day."

Mrs. Garrett was born in the Langruth (Manitoba) community. Her parents were the pioneers Johann Johannsson from Húsabaka in Seiluhreppi,

Skagafjarðarsýsla, and his wife Sigríður Ólafsdóttir, Hofstöðum, Vindhælis-hreppi in Húnavtanssýsla. In 1917 she married George I. H. Garrett, now principal of Portage la Prairie Collegiate, since 1936. Previously he had taught school at Langruth, Benito, Sifton, Glenboro, Melita and Killarney, with a distinguished record. Mr. and Mrs. Garrett have a small farm in the Langruth district where they often spend their holidays and where Mr. Garrett enjoys a little farm work as a hobby.

Wherever they have lived Mrs. Garrett has been actively engaged in church and social work, and Mr. Garrett has encouraged her with a smile. During the five years they spent in Glenboro Mrs. Garrett took keen interest in the activities of her own people, — the Icelanders, and was particularly active in

dramatics. This was during the never-to-be forgotten heyday of dramatics in Glenboro, and Icelandic plays such as "Tengdamamma", "Tengdapabbi", "Happið" and others were put on, Mrs. Garrett taking part in most of them.

Mrs. Garrett in spite of her many years of service is still young and active. Her charming personality, her capacity for making friends, combined with strong convictions and good judgment are valuable leadership qualities, which have made her work easier for herself and those whom she works with.

Mr. and Mrs. Garrett have one son, Alex who is a graduate in Agriculture of the U. of M. He served in World War II, as Captain in the Fort Garry Horse, and was overseas from 1942—1945. He is married and lives on a farm outside of Calgary.

G. J. Oleson

RECEIVES MERITED RECOGNITION

Major N. O. Bardal was decorated with the Long Service and Efficiency medal by the Department of National Defence, (Army) Ottawa. Major Bardal has served with the Canadian Army for 20 years, in the last World War he served with the Winnipeg Grenadiers

in Jamaica and Hong Kong, where he was held a prisoner of war until Sept. 1945. Major Bardal is the son of Mr. and Mrs. A. S. Bardal, Winnipeg.

★

"Wings of the Wind" (poems) price \$1.00: Order from Albert L. Halldorson, 357 Beverley St. Winnipeg, Man., or Björnsson's Book Store, 702 Sargent Ave., Winnipeg.

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PTE. RAYMOND S. INDRIDSON—Born August 31, 1922 at Selkirk, Man. Joined the Canadian Army September 20, 1941. Trained at Fort Garry, Man., Shilo Camp, Man., and Kingston, Ont. Discharged November 30, 1945.

Sons of Mr. & Mrs. S. Indridson, Selkirk, Man.



CPO. PALMI E. JOHNSON—Born at Arnes, Man., July 8, 1921. Enlisted in R.C.N.V.R. Aug. 12, 1942. Served in Canada and Newfoundland. Discharged Aug. 15, 1945. Son of Magnus E. and Sigridur Johnson, Winnipeg, Man.



CPO. GEORGE ASGEIRSON—Born in Winnipeg, Man. Enlisted in R.C.N.V.R. July 22, 1942. He was stationed at Halifax, N. S. Discharged Sept. 4, 1945. Son of Mr. & Mrs. John Asgeirson, Winnipeg, Man.



L.A.C. Gudmundur W. Goodman



F./S. Victor R. Goodman

LAC. GUDMUNDUR W. GOODMAN—Born at Lundar, Man., September 6, 1920. Was with the R.C.A.F. Discharged in 1946.

F./S. VICTOR R. GOODMAN—Born at Lundar, Man., December 29, 1921. Served with the R.C.A.F. in India and Burma. Discharged in 1946.

Sons of Mr. & Mrs. Kristjan Goodman, Thicket Portage, Man.



CPL. HJALMAR V. LARUSSEN—Born at Gimli, Man., Oct. 28, 1912. Enlisted in the R.C.A. May 8, 1941. Served in Canada and Newfoundland. Discharged May 30, 1946. Son of Palmi and the late Gudrun Larusson, Gimli, Man.



W.O. 1 RALPH PETER CRAWFORD—Born at Athabasca, Alta., March 19, 1917. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. Jan. 1941 at Saskatoon, Sask. Graduated at Rivers, Man., as navigator B. Served with coastal command. Was injured at Nassau, B.I. while serving with R.A.F. Served as instructor for 1½ years at Protage La Prairie, Man. Son of Julius C. and the late Halla (Eymundson) Crawford, Ottawa, Ont.

Father, Daughter and Son



Stefan Solvason



Lieut. N/S I. G. S. Gell



Sto. 1/c Hugh B. Solvason

STEFAN SOLVASON—Born at Winnipeg, Man. Served in World War I with the 27th Battalion in France from November 20, 1915 to July 28, 1919. In World War II he joined the auxiliary services in 1940. He was director of entertainment at Shilo Camp until he joined the Veteran's Guard February 6, 1941. Discharged July 10, 1941. Son of the late Gunnlaugur and Gudridur Solvason.

LIEUT. N/S ISABEL GUDRIDUR SOLVASON GELL—Born in Selkirk, Man. Joined the R.C.A.M.C. August 1943. Was with the Victoria Military Hospital until March 1944. Also with No. 19 Canadian Gen. Hospital in Warwickshire and No. 4 Canadian Gen. Hospital in Hantsire, England. Discharged June 1946.

STO. 1/c HUGH B. SOLVASON—Born in Winnipeg, Man. Enlisted in R.C.N.V.R. at Victoria, B.C., April 20, 1943. Served on H.M.S. Whittaker. While on loan to the British Navy he served on H.M.C.S. Niobe and H.M.C.S. Petrolia on Atlantic Convoy from St. Johns, Nfld. to Londonderry, Ireland. Discharged November 27, 1945.

Daughter and son of Stefan and Anna Solvason, Vancouver, B.C.

The Icelandic Canadian

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ÞJÓÐRÆKNISFÉLAG ÍSLENDINGA, Kjartansgötu 4,
Reykjavík Iceland

Icelandic National League Convention

The 30th annual convention of the Icelandic National League was held at the Good Templar's Hall, Winnipeg, February 21, 22 and 23. Rev. P. M. Petursson presided.

Paul Bardal reported on the Memorial Hall, showing that no progress has been made on this project, although resolutions passed at last year's convention authorized the I. N. League to take the necessary steps to launch the work.

Mrs. Holmfridur Danielson who during the previous year had been educational representative for the league reported on work done subsequent to last year's convention. Visits had been made to the league's chapters at Brown, Selkirk, Gimli, Arborg and Riverton in Manitoba; Vancouver, B.C. and Blaine, Washington.

During the year she had made 24 visits to ten chapters, visited over 80 homes and held 25 meetings. Fifteen addresses were given outlining feasible methods in upholding Icelandic cultural activities, and six lectures on Iceland. Over 3000 copies of Icelandic lesson sheets, songs and poems were mimeographed for the various Icelandic schools. Some of these are still being used at Gimli, the school having been re-opened after New Year with over fifty pupils. During the past year thirty-five adults gave of their time to this cultural effort as teachers, choir directors and group leaders.

The adult study group at Riverton which proved so successful last year, re-opened its classes last fall, and members are now studying the history of Icelandic pioneers in this country, using as source material the lectures that were given at the Icelandic Canadian

Evening School and later published in the Icelandic Canadian. Mrs. Danielson also told the convention of a very interesting 'Icelandic project' developed by school children at Iroquois Falls, Ontario. This project is featured in this issue of the magazine.

The convention voiced regret that Mrs. Danielson is unable to continue this cultural work for the league.

Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson favored the convention with a report on the progress made in the work of establishing a Chair of Icelandic Language and Literature at the U. of M. This work has during the last two years been sponsored by five Winnipeg organizations and is featured in another section of the Icelandic Canadian.

All the concerts held during the convention were well attended. The Icelandic Canadian club concert was held Monday evening February 21, at the First Lutheran church, and was particularly dedicated to publicizing the importance of the Chair in Icelandic. Dr. K. J. Austman was the main speaker, his topic being 'Some aspects of the Icelandic question', with particular reference to the scope and possibilities of the Chair.

The Chair, when established could be a centre for research into the history of North-eastern North America, he said, as pointed out by Dr. V. Stefansson recently. The new department at the University could also serve as a repository of microfilm reproductions of old Icelandic manuscripts, as the original would be liable to destruction in the event of another war.

Further, he said, a study of Icelandic, a Classical language with a great lit-

erature, would benefit students regardless of national extraction.

Mr. Thor Thors brought greetings from the Icelandic government, and congratulated the Icelandic community here on its cultural achievements. Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson spoke on the Icelandic Chair project and its almost assured success, and read letters of congratulations from Dr. A. H. S. Gillson, president of the U. of M., and Lee Hollander, prof. of Germanic Language and Literature at the U. of Texas.

Musical selections were given by, Mrs. Pearl Johnson, soprano, Erlingur Eggertson, baritone, Vocal ensemble from the Daniel McIntyre Collegiate, with extracts from the operetta, "Iolanthe", and Janice Meyers, accordion solo. Accompanist was Sigrid Bardal. Mr. Axel Vopnfjord was chairman.

Following the concert a reception was held in the lower auditorium of the church in honor of the artists, and of Iceland's representatives, Mr. and Mrs. Thors.

The Winnipeg chapter, "Frón" held its concert Tuesday evening at the Marlborough hotel. Hon Thor Thors gave an address on Iceland: its place in the United Nations, its progress, and its outlook for the future.

Solos were given by, Palmi Palma son, violinist, and Elma Gislason, soprano. The Junior Board of Trade male voice choir gave two groups of songs, under the direction of Kerr Wilson and accompanied by Mrs. Wilson. An original poem was read by E. P. Jonsen. Prof. T. J. Oleson presided. Following the programme there was a dance.

At the Icel. National League concert held Wednesday night in the First Lutheran church, Hon. Thor Thors again gave the main address, dealing

with cultural relations between Iceland and Icelandic descendants here, and the friendly relationship existing between Canada and Iceland. Dr. R. Beck spoke to commemorate the League's 30th anniversary. Miss Thora Asgeirson gave piano solos, and E. Eggertson again gave vocal solos.

Mr. Thors presented G. J. Guttormson, noted poet of Riverton, Man., with the decoration of Grand Knight of the Order of the Falcons, which had been conferred on him by the President and Government of Iceland on the occasion of his 70th birthday last November.

Honorary memberships in the League were presented to Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson, Winnipeg, Judge G. Grimson, Rugby, N. D., and Rev. F. Hallgrimsson, Reykjavik, Iceland.

Rev. P. M. Petursson was re-elected president of the League. Others on the executive are: T. J. Oleson, J. J. Bildfell, G. L. Johannson, Ingibjorg Jonsen, G. Eggertson, G. Levy, A. G. Eggertson, K. C. and O. Petursson.

ANOTHER ICELANDIC QUEEN

Miss Gloria Gray of the Norberry Community Club, was chosen Miss Winnipeg, 1949, from among 24 candidates at the fourth annual Jamboree of the Associated Community Clubs of Greater Winnipeg at the Civic Auditorium, March, 18. Princesses chosen were: Pat Hartman of the West Kildonan Club, and Colleen McKentry, Weston Memorial Club.

Gloria, twenty-year-old office worker is the daughter of Harry Gray and his wife Gudrun Sheila (Arnason). Gloria's maternal grandparents are Mrs. Sigurlaug Arnason, of Winnipeg (formerly of Churchbridge, Sask.), and the late Jon Arnason.

Hon. Thor Thors and Mrs. Thors in Winnipeg



Hon. Thor Thors

An outstanding feature of the annual convention of the Icelandic National League this year was the presence of Hon. Thor Thors Icelandic Minister to Washington and Canada, and his gracious wife, Augusta. Not only did Mr. Thors give addresses at all the concerts held in connection with the convention, but together they attended most of the sessions taking a keen interest in all the proceedings.

The addresses given here by Mr. Thors on Iceland and on international affairs, based on his wide experience, sound judgment and solid convictions, were much appreciated for their informative value, clarity and conciseness.

Coming from Washington's diplomatic activities and 70-above zero weather to Winnipeg's crisp, cold winter was quite a change, but Mr. and Mrs. Thors were kept thoroughly busy, and the friendly warmth of our city's



Mrs. Agusta Thors

reception no doubt dispelled somewhat nature's cold blasts.

Mrs. Thors who has accompanied her husband on his diplomatic missions to many foreign countries, and last year attended with him the meetings of the general assembly of the United Nations in Paris, speaks Spanish, as well as English and all the Scandinavian languages.

When asked about her family Mrs. Thors took from her handbag a little folding silver frame to show us their two sons and daughter, Margret, 21, who has now finished her schooling at Briarcliffe Junior College, New York. She is much in demand as a charming unofficial ambassador of Iceland, at various social and diplomatic functions in Washington, and had just left for Galveston, Texas to represent Iceland at the Mardi Gras. One son, Ingolfur

is 18 and Thor Junior is 14. Mrs. Thors who is a member of the Women's Guild of American University is often

invited to speak on Iceland to church groups and other women's organizations.

Farewell to Hon. and Mrs. Thor Thors

The Icel. Nat. League sponsored a dinner in honor of Thor Thors and Mrs. Thors at the Royal Alexandra hotel, Feb. 24.

This being Mr. Thors' first visit to Winnipeg since his appointment as Minister to Canada several guests were present from official circles, both provincial and municipal. These included, the Lieut-gov., R. F. McWilliams, Hon. D. L. Campbell, Premier of Manitoba, Mayor Garnet Coulter, Dr. A. H. S. Gillson, president of the U. of M., Mr. Justice Dysart, chancellor of the U. of M., and W. H. McKinney, American consul-general, together with their wives.

Addresses were given by Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Campbell, Dr. Gillson, Hon. Thor Thors, Rev. V. J. Eylands, Dr. R. Beck, and Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson who announced that Mr. Thors had associated himself with the most important project being sponsored by Icelandic descendants all over America, by becoming one of the founders of the Icelandic Chair at the U. of M.

A group of musical selections was given by a string trio under the direction of Palmi Palmason, and vocal solos by Mrs. Rosa Vernon accompanied by Mrs. E. A. Isfeld. Mr. E. P. Jonsson read a poem in Icelandic, Rev. P. M. Petursson presided.

CAROL FELDSTED

A young girl well known to many readers of the Icelandic Canadian has one foot well over the threshold of literary achievement. Miss Carol Feldsted's book, "Design Fundamentals," is being published by Pitman Publishing Corporation of New York and Toronto, and will be on the book stands by the summer of 1950. This is a technical work on design, lavishly illustrated.

Miss Feldsted has had a brilliant scholastic career. While still at Gordon Bell High School, in 1934-35, she entered a 2500 word Australian Essay competition and won a \$50.00 prize. She was also awarded a scholarship at the Art Institute of Chicago, 1940-41, for general proficiency, and holds a Bachelor's degree in Art Education

from that school, as well as being Master of Fine Arts.

In traditional Canadian fashion, Miss Feldsted served her term as school teacher during 1937-39 at Simpson School, Yorkton, Sask., where she taught a primary grade. While attending the Art Institute at Chicago, she devoted one morning a week to teaching art to grade 1 to 5 in St. Ita School of that City. For the past three years she has been lecturer in Fine Arts at the University of Manitoba. She has also done a good deal of free lance art work.

Carol Feldsted is the daughter of E. S. Feldsted, wellknown jeweller, of Winnipeg, and his wife, Ninna. (See picture June 1943 issue).

BOOK REVIEW

Wings of the Wind (80 pp). By Albert L. Halldorsson. Columbia Press, Winnipeg. (1948)

This slim volume of poems and prose essays is the work of a young Winnipeg author of Icelandic extraction.

Those interested in literary matters have often wondered whether the strong literary traditions brought to this continent by the Icelandic pioneers would in time find worthy expression in the work of their English speaking descendants. Evidence of this is so far inconclusive. It is true that some of our people have written poetry in the English language and examples of competent verse from this source come readily to mind, but the output has been small and the appearance of a book of poems is an occurrence rare enough to warrant special notice.

While this book lacks technical brilliance and has many other faults, often found and always to be expected in the work of the beginner, it is nevertheless warmly welcomed as a sincere and earnest attempt by a young man of talent to express his thoughts and feelings in poetic form.

The author's travels on the *Wings of the Wind* have taken him to the four corners of the earth.

The book contains some good descriptive writing on the beauties of far-away places and many homely observations on man and nature. With the author's simple and wholly admirable philosophy one dares not quarrel although a less rigid conformity might well be expected in one so young. Mr. Halldorsson is on more solid ground however, when he writes of things

nearer home and keeps a tight rein on his imagination. An unpretentious poem in narrative style entitled "A Ballad of Lake Winnipeg", is one of his best. The last stanza follows:

And there, scarce a yard from the bow
of the boat

Where the waters were surfless, serene,
We gazed at the reef with its frowning
walls,

Chilled by what might have been.
And so brave sailors beware of the lake
When waters seem silent and free;
For winds are not faithful and skies
are not true

To sailors like you and me!

With greater experience and study of craftsmanship our sailor will find the waters of poetry less dangerous to manage. We wish him well on his next voyage. In the meantime there is no doubt that a great many people will enjoy reading these first poems, and a more wholesome literary fare could not be recommended for those who prefer good, old fashioned poetry to the tortured prose of contemporary poets.

H. Th.

Early in March, Miss Olive Olson was crowned Queen by Mayor W. E. Gordon at the annual Kinsmen's Carnival at the Alexandra rink, Selkirk, Man. Princesses were Misses Laufey Bjornson and Elsie Praznik.

★

Invited to Iceland

News has been received that Judge G. Grimsson of Rugby, N. D. and Mrs. Grimsson, and Dr. and Mrs. Vilhjalmur Stefansson have been invited to visit Iceland next July.

MEMBERS' CORNER

By Holmfridur Danielson



Paul Bardal

Recently Paul Bardal was elected president of the Winnipeg North-centre Liberal Association, having previously served in that office for five years. He has had a long and active career in public service and has never spared himself when his convictions have prompted him to campaign for some worthy cause.

"The roots of few families go deeper into Winnipeg's history than those of the Bardals whose best-known member now is Paul Bardal, former legislator and councillor", says the Winnipeg Tribune when it lately featured Paul in its "Get Acquainted" column. ". . . . He talked of Winnipeg with the prideful tones of a man who remembered childhood play on a muddy Main St. and over grasslands covered now with buildings that already suffer from middle-age spread."

But in our growing city he regrets "the decline of the expressive spirit that existed in the old days. We should have some of that verve the pioneers had", he says. Perhaps it is partly his keen feeling for the achievements of the pioneers and the wish to incorporate their "spirit and verve" into our lives that has made him such an ardent supporter of the Icelandic Canadian Club and especially of the Magazine. He likes the realistic, direct approach to all problems. To him it is essential to proceed with a minimum of fuss and false starts, and endeavor to combine the best of the past with the finest in the present to build for a great future.

Paul, who was born Nov. 5, 1889, grew up in Winnipeg, his parents Páll Bardal and his wife Halldora (Petursson) having been among the early pioneers. He got his first job in 1912, in the box office of the Walker Theatre. "There were five live theatres in Winnipeg in those days," he says, "and they all played to packed houses. Too bad it's all gone."

Paul who has always been profoundly interested in the cultural activities of our city, is a charter member of the Men's Musical Club and for almost thirty years choirmaster at the First Lutheran Church. And the twilight community song-fest enjoyed each year at the Icelandic Celebration at Gimli just would not be the same without Paul there leading the singing in his deep, pleasant voice and inspiring the others to participate.

Paul campaigned successfully for a seat on the City council in 1931 and served continuously as alderman for the next ten years until he was elected

to the Manitoba legislature where he remained until 1945.

During his ten-year term on the Council he served as acting mayor, police commissioner and member of various committees. He was a city delegate to Ottawa many times, and did his difficult stint as chairman of the relief committee during the Hungry Thirties. He is at present vice-president of the Family Bureau.

Paul has been a member of the Kiwanis Club for 20 years, is Lutheran lay member of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and serves on the executive of the Icelandic Canadian club. Since childhood an avid reader, a veritable bookworm, yet he finds time for a bit of relaxation in sports, playing golf and being member of a billiard league.

Now, in case we haven't fully accounted for every minute of his time we might add that Paul also has a regular job, being Manager for The Bardal Funeral Home.

Paul has one daughter, Sigrid, now in her second year at United College. His wife, Oddny (Bergman) passed away in 1942.

★

Even if we could we would not keep our members from embracing opportunity when it knocks at their door! Now Caroline Gunnarsson is leaving the fold to become reporter on the **Shaunavon Standard**, in Saskatchewan.

For the last two years she has been a valuable member of the Magazine staff, and will be greatly missed by this department officially and unofficially. We will look back with nostalgia on all the good times we had together at 869 Garfield street, when we were not by any means working for our beloved magazine, but merely whiling away a

Sunday-evening-after-church, talking and reading snatches of history, philosophy, and World Topics. If you think this sounds like dull, heavy go-



Caroline Gunnarsson

ing, just try spending a four-hour session with someone as vitally alive as Caroline is, reading and discussing George Jean Nathan, Theodore Dreiser, Bertrand Russell, (et al), and you will find that your main worry will be to tear yourself away in time to catch the last bus home!

Caroline, who was born in Iceland came to Churchbridge, Sask. when she was ten years old, with her parents, Gunnar Gunnarsson and his wife, Gróa (Magnúsdóttir). She took a business course in Winnipeg and later worked there until joining the C.W.A.C. in 1942. After her basic training in Quebec she served as stenographer in District Depot, Winnipeg, until she was appointed to Ottawa, editor of the "Newsletter", the official organ of the C.W.A.C., which position she held until her discharge in 1945.

Since returning to Winnipeg she has worked as stenographer for D. V.

A. and for a legal office. She has been active in the Valour Road Legion and had lately been appointed editor of their little magazine the 'Bronze Tablet'. She is also a member of the Winnipeg Dramatic Society, "For, although I can't act," she says, with the proper spirit of true service, "I can be of use in various other ways."

Our best wishes go with Caroline and we know she is still one of us and will occasionally send us some bright item for the magazine.

★

One of our most hard working members is the vice-president, Wilhelm Kristjanson. During every moment that he can spare from his work at the Manitoba Correspondence branch — (Dept., of Education) he devotes to his manuscript, **Icelanders in Manitoba**, which he is writing on a Fellowship from the Manitoba Historical Society.

But at the beginning of March he took a few days off from the manuscript to prepare a radio script which he was asked to give over CBW on the University series of talks. His topic was

'The Icelandic People In Manitoba', and was delivered Wednesday evening, March 9. It will be published with illustrations in the Manitoba School Journal, in the near future.

★

A Letter From Ena

Ena Anderson writes from Vancouver that she is just as busy as she used to be here when she was working for the Club. She is now a member of the newly formed Symphony Choir of 150 voices which, with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Jacques Singer, performed Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at the Orpheum Theatre, in Vancouver, on March 20. This is the Western Canadian premiere of this immortal work of Beethoven. Later the Orchestra and Chorus expects to perform the work in Seattle.

Ena is also a member of the Lutheran Church (Icel.) choir and is working in the Sunday School.

She has sent us a contribution for the Chair in Icelandic at U. of M.

Samson and Goodmundson Buy Printing Plant

At the beginning of this year John V. Samson and Edwin T. Goodmundson purchased the printing plant from the Viking Press Ltd. It will be operated on the former premises, 853 Sargent Avenue, under the new name of **Viking Printers**.

Both young men have worked at Viking Press as printers, Samson since 1930 and Goodmundson for over 10 years, exclusive of his two-year war

service. They have printed the Icelandic Canadian since it first appeared seven years ago, and the magazine staff has found them very efficient and congenial to do business with.

Samson and Goodmundson are now open for business in the commercial field of printing and are expanding their contacts. They will continue to print "Heimskringla" for the Viking Press Ltd.

Dedication at Blaine

A new date has entered the history of Icelandic accomplishments on the North American Continent. January 15th of this year will mark the beginning of security and comfort for many an old timer who smoothed the way for our generation in the Western Hemisphere. At 1.30 in the afternoon of that day three hundred people gathered to witness the dedication of Stafholt, the beautiful Icelandic old folks' home at Blaine, Washington.

The opening remarks by Mr. Einar Simonarson, President of the Executive Committee, were followed with a prayer by Rev. Dr. H. S. Sigmar. Then, accompanied by Mrs. Emily Magnússon Reed, the assembly sang an Icelandic hymn. Chief item on the programme was a stirring dedication address by Rev. Kolbein Simundson.

An endearing touch was a solo by Mrs. Ninna Stevens. In memoriam to her parents and grandparents she sang "Nú legg eg augun aftur", that sweetly comforting evening prayer which is the treasured heritage of all who speak the language of our forebears. Solos were also rendered by Mr. Tani Björnson and Mrs. W. Hörður Vopnfjörð who, accompanied by Mrs. Nemyer, sang an original number, composed for the occasion by Mr. S. H. Helgason. Mr. Elias K. Breiðfjörð, Mrs. Halldor Johnson, John Breiðfjörð, and Nina Breiðfjörð sang a quartette, with Mrs. Nemyer at the piano.

Rev. Guðmundur P. Johnson, former president of the original committee appointed by the Chapter "Aldan" of the Icelandic League at the beginning of 1945 spoke to the gathering. Mrs. Anna Kristjanson, wife of Rev. Albert Kristjanson brought greetings and good wishes from her husband, who,

owing to ill health, was unable to attend. Mr. Guðmundur Gíslason, in charge of the Old Folks Home, Höfn, at Vancouver, B. C., also expressed his pleasure at the stately home that is to shelter the aging generation of our people in Blaine.

Greetings and good wishes rained on the home by telegram and through the mails. There was an original poem, entitled "Stafholt" by Jón Magnússon, of Seattle, and just to add conviction to their words, Mr. K. S. Thordarson of Seattle and Rev. O. S. Thorlakson of Berkley, California, each slipped \$100 into their letter.

All the way from San Francisco, California, came Mr. Ellis Stoneson and Chris Finnson. These men had special reason to rejoice. The home would not have been possible but for the royal financial contribution of Ellis and Henry Stoneson. Mr. Chris Finnson and Andres F. Oddstad Jr. architects, rendered their professional services free of charge as well as a substantial cash donation. Mr. Guy Eiford, contractor, also rates special mention. He supervised the construction of the building, supplying all the tools, purchasing materials, engaging all the labour and keeping the accounts. He gave to the project services worth thousands of dollars had he put a price on them.

In his remarks, Mr. Ellis Stoneson said that this home for the old folks was a mere token to the pioneers. It is a very tangible token of the love and respect they have earned from their descendants and of the fine qualities of responsible citizenship and social conscience which they bequeathed to succeeding generations in the new land.

THE ARCTIC IS IMPORTANT

When the Chair in Icelandic is established at the University of Manitoba it should be made a centre for research into the history of Northeastern North America and the Arctic regions, said Vilhjalmur Stefansson, famed Arctic explorer and writer at a dinner in his honor at the Fort Garry hotel, February 14th.

The dinner was sponsored by the five Winnipeg organizations that have been working on the establishment of a Chair in Icelandic Language and Literature at the University of Manitoba.

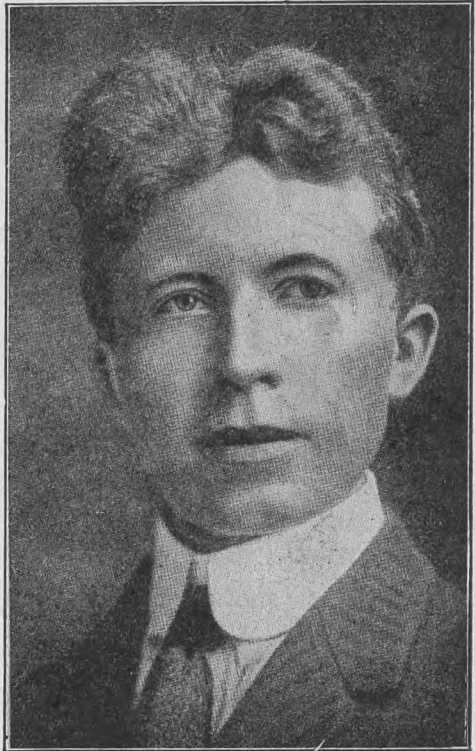
"A department of Arctic studies would be as logical here as tropical studies are at the University of Sydney, Australia," said Dr. Stefansson.

The history of North America did not start in 1492, he pointed out. "We have a continuous history starting long before Columbus and we can follow it through the *Sagas*, and through the documents of the Roman Catholic church".

Quoting Finnur Jonsson, an Icelandic authority, he said that in the 12th century there were about 10,000 Scandinavians in Greenland. He told how the Greenlanders had sailed their ships to Labrador for timber and how they had also brought back furs with which to pay their tithes to the church in Rome.

Dr. Stefansson said Russia has self-supporting Arctic communities of 10,000 to 40,000 people. Newcomers were trekking to the 90-below zero weather areas with as much enthusiasm as early pioneers in Canada.

An authority on the far north, Dr. Stefansson who was born of Icelandic parents in 1879 at Arnes, Manitoba, was on his way back to New York with



Vilhjalmur Stefansson

his wife after spending some time in Saskatchewan and Manitoba gathering data for his "Arctic Encyclopedia".

During the war Stefansson compiled an *Arctic Manual* of two volumes for the United States Armed Services. Then when asked for suggestions on procedure to increase Arctic knowledge for purposes of defence he put forth three ideas: a bibliography of arctic literature, a list of arctic experts the world over, and an arctic encyclopedia.

The last of these tasks was assigned to Stefansson by the U. S. Office of Naval Research, and a fund allotted to him to pay the salaries of research writers and a staff of clerks.

To this encyclopedia which when

finished towards the end of this year will fill some twelve volumes, contributions have been made by branches of the government and by distinguished societies such as The National Geographic Society, the Smithsonian Institution, and others.

But the greatest mass of information for the work will be gleaned from Stefansson's own Arctic Library of some 16,000 books, and over 17,000 pamphlets, which he has been collecting by various methods since the early 1920's. Sometimes when giving lectures for historical or scientific societies he would take as payment their duplicates of valuable or rare books on the arctic. When on tour he will scour second-hand stores, often with surprising re-

sults. Some of his rare sources have been bought for a dollar or two, and he has been offered two thousand dollars for one of his most precious books.

He employs two full-time librarians who under the direction of Mrs. Stefansson look after cataloguing, maintenance and supervision of the library. Mrs. Stefansson who has herself written two books, is doing a section on Alaska for the encyclopedia.

The arctic and subarctic together comprise more than eighty percent of Alaska, about sixty per-cent of Canada, and half of the Soviet Union. It is a safe guess that the Stefansson library contains copies of most publications, now extant, dealing with various aspects of life in these northern regions.

IN THE NEWS



Miss Helen Katherine Josephson was last year awarded a scholarship of \$25.00 by the Oak River I. O. O. F. for the highest standing in Grade XI. She also won the first prize of \$25.00

in the annual Cancer Essay contest for Grades XI and XII, in Manitoba, sponsored by the Manitoba Cancer Relief and Research Institute.

Helen was born at Sinclair, Man., and attended Bardal consolidated school and Oak River High school. This year she is taking her first year University at Brandon College, Brandon, Man. She is a daughter of Jacob Josephson of Sinclair and his late wife Louise, and a grand-daughter of the late Thorsteinn and Hólmfríður Josephson.

★

At the Autumn convocation of the U. of B. C. Miss Anna Jean Thomson received her degree in Science. She is a daughter of the late Roy Thomson, and his wife Björg, now matron of the Old Folks Home, Vancouver — (see Icel. Can., Summer /48.)

ERLING BENGTTSSON SCORES A HIT



In January, sixteen-year old **Erling Bengtsson** who last summer came to study at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia with world renowned cellist and teacher Piatigorski, was soloist with the Scandinavian Symphony orchestra, at Scottish Rite Cathedral, Detroit, and received the highest plaudits of critics. Following are brief extracts from some of the reviews in the daily papers:

In an article entitled: "Young Icelandic Cellist Plays Haydn Superbly", the **Detroit Free Press**, says: "Young Bengtsson, at 16, has arrived at a musical maturity that might be envied by his elders. His tone is of the quality that is encountered only among the elect of the cello" . . .

Detroit Times: "Terrific Talent" "His intonation is perfect and

unerring. His tone is beautiful and his rhythmic sense is powerful. Unlike many a major cellist he never gropes for tone We think the people who heard his performance with the Scandinavians were hearing one of the First American Concerts of an artist who will quickly reach the top."

The Detroit News — "He addresses the music as an adult artist, his brain obviously comprehends every measure of it and his technique is glittering . . . Our major orchestras of non-professionals have never done better by the community than arranging this American debut of a really remarkable young Icelander."

Erling Bengtsson is in America on a scholarship from the Musical Club of Reykjavik, Iceland.

★

Miss Dolores Swanson took part in the Ballet Swan Lake in the Carnival of the Ice Club of Greater Winnipeg. "The Ebony Chest," Miss Swanson is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Swanson of Winnipeg. Other girls of Icelandic descent that took part in the "Ebony Chest" Carnival are as follows: Joyce Neillings, 720 Beverley St., June Magnusson, 1079 Spruce St., Donna Marie Stephenson, 1167 Grosvenor Ave., Sharon Thorvaldson, 902 Banning St., Barbara Thorsteinson, 540 Agnes St., Dorothy Johnson, 813 Arlington St., Arla May Thorkelson, 1164 Dominion St., Barbara Bjornson, 1077 Spruce St., Bonnie Lynn Johannesson, 639 Victor St., Dale Johanneson, 639 Victor St.

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THE

ICELANDIC CANADIAN

Early Historic Glimpses of Icelandic People in Winnipeg

(Continued from page 14)

Notre Dame Avenue, at a cost of about \$4,000.00. He bought the printing equipment from the defunct Framfara Publishing Company and started to publish *Leifur*, a three double-columned paper of the same size as *Framfari* had been. This was a daring undertaking at best, but particularly so, as Helgi evidently lacked the necessary qualifications for discharging some of the most elementary duties of a writer. Rev. F. J. Bergman says in this connection that Helgi was slow of speech and slow thinking, but the foremost difficulty for him was to write. This seems to me to be pretty severe arraignment. It is no doubt true that Helgi lacked educational qualifications which he never had a chance to acquire. He certainly possessed others that in a way made up for his educational shortcomings, such as independence of thought and action, truthfulness and an unquestionable desire to be useful and helpful to his compatriots. He himself said: "I do not mind losing one to two thousand dollars, if by doing so I can be of service to my countrymen."

The paper met with a varied reception. Some hailed it as God-sent, others plainly saw its shortcomings and hoped for improvement, and some condemned it altogether as did a man in North Dakota who wrote in *Leifur*: "What shall we say about *Leifur*. I don't like *Leifur*. It is both too expensive, which in itself is bad enough, but it is still worse how senseless the poor thing is." Helgi did not take this criticism lying down. He faced his critics squarely and said: "I have heard from different

parties that some people have no confidence in me to conduct *Leifur* in such a way that the paper may become useful in promoting public welfare. In order to ameliorate the heart trouble these people are afflicted with, I am going to give them this medicine. You need not expect any change as far as the editorial policy of the paper is concerned for the simple reason that as long as I am the owner of *Leifur*, publish it at my own expense, and have time and opportunity to supervise it, I intend to have the final say in these matters. I, of course, do not know what effect this dose will have on the patient but it is the only one I have in my supply of drugs befitting the disease. *Leifur* is my begotten son and if the father does not possess will, wisdom, or intelligence to bring him up in such a way that he may become a useful factor in the community, then it behooves that the paper suffer the same disgrace as those do who beget an offspring, but lack intelligence to bring it up." I do not quote this reply of Helgi Jónsson to his critics here for its elegance or its lack of elegance, but principally to show his attitude of mind. Whatever men may say about Helgi's qualifications for undertaking this publication, it can hardly be denied that the undertaking was a brave one, and one which was bound to be a drain on the financial resources of anyone who undertook it at that time. Yet that did not deter Helgi from undertaking it. He states in his paper that it requires 1500 subscribers to make the undertaking self-supporting at \$2.00 per subscrip-

tion, per year. Fifteen hundred subscribers does not seem outrageously high to us now, but then it was almost hopeless, so in order to keep things going, Helgi went to Ottawa in the fall of 1883 and sold 2000 copies of *Leifur* to the Macdonald government for distribution in Iceland at \$2.00 per copy.

The social activities among the Icelanders in Winnipeg during the year of 1883 were confined in a large degree to assisting the new-comers from Iceland as I have mentioned before; continuous meetings of the Icelandic Society, organization of a day school for teaching young people at the cost of \$2.00 per month for those who were in a position to pay, and, for those who could not pay, free tuition. The school was conducted under the principalship of Magnus Paulson. The first Christmas Tree concert among the Icelanders was also held during the Christmas holidays of 1883 under the sponsorship of B. L. Baldvinsson, Kristrún Ólafsdóttir and Sigríður Jónsdóttir (Björnson).

The year 1884 was very important in various ways as far as the Icelandic colony in Winnipeg was concerned. Work was more plentiful, and money easier than it had been during the previous year. Social activities were more pronounced and exciting than they had ever been.

In June, 1884, a young man who had been studying in Ontario, Frímánn Bjarnason Arngrímsson, whose grandfather was pastor at Bægisá, came to Winnipeg and at once took a very active part in the social life of the Icelandic people. He was in some respects a very promising man. He had received a considerable education, held a first class Teacher's Certificate, and had completed his second year in college. He was a marvelous student, and could master any educational subject with

ease and efficiency. He continued his studies at the University of Manitoba, and graduated from that institution in 1885 with high honours, and an \$80.00 scholarship.

This man, Frímánn Arngrímsson, took an active part in the social life of the Icelanders in Winnipeg, as stated above. He delivered three lectures in 1884, and one in the Fall. These lectures covered a variety of subjects. According to the newspaper *Leifur*, the title of the first lecture on June 20th, 1884, was: Natural Science, Arts, Religion, and a learned Icelandic Educational Institution in Winnipeg." I do not know what idea is conveyed to you by this title, but to me it denotes a mind that is lacking in selective ability and practical conclusions. In fact this lack was the outstanding characteristic of the man himself.

There is no doubt in my mind that his intentions in most cases were good, and his desire to be of service to his compatriots sincere, but he was handicapped by lack of foresight, by immature judgment, and precipitate conclusions and actions.

Mr. Arngrímsson was undoubtedly sincere when he, as a guest of the Icelandic Society for the first time, and after having been granted the full privileges of a member for courtesy's sake, proposed and moved the discontinuation of the Icelandic Society and the organization in its place of a general labor society, without having any tangible idea of the object, or the real duties of such an organization. This, of course, made the whole thing ridiculous. But these were his ways.

The learned school idea of Mr. Arngrímsson met with a more favorable reception among the members of the Society and Icelanders in general. It was an idea dear to their hearts, and a

worthwhile, but at that time hardly attainable goal, for so few people of any race were then domiciled in this Western land. This educational question was discussed at numerous meetings of the Icelandic Society, and a committee of nine members was appointed to further consider it. That committee reported to the Society on the 18th of July, 1884. The spokesman of the committee, Mr. M. Paulson, told the meeting that it had been agreed: "that it was desirable to have a school where the Icelandic language was taught in addition to the usual higher grade subjects; that such an institution would require at least two teachers at a combined salary of \$1500 a year, and a \$15,000 endowment fund." The tuition fee proposed by the committee was \$5.00. This report ended the dream about establishing an institution of higher learning among the Icelandic people in America at that time.

The weekly newspaper *Leifur* had now been published little over a year and the interest taken in it by the Icelandic people had been and was, lively. Many contributed to the paper both prose and poetry. No fewer than ten poets were represented. Among those were Páll Magnússon, Kristinn Stefánsson, Sigurður J. Jóhannesson, Magnús Sigurðsson, Þorsteinn Einarsson (brother of Sigfús and Sigurður Anderson), Bárður Sigurðsson, W. H. Paulson, Sigurbjörn Stefánsson, Arnfríður Jónsdóttir, K. N. Júlíus and Torfhildur Hólm. The prose writers were legion. Yet the paper, for all that, was having its troubles. On September 10th, 1884, we find the following in the paper written by the editor: "I have heard lately that Frimann Arngrímsson and Magnús Paulson have been visiting Icelandic homes for the purpose of securing signatures to a document declaring

their dissatisfaction with the paper *Leifur*, and that the paper is not worth continuing. This document is then to be sent to the Government at Ottawa, after I have been given the choice of changing the paper according to their dictation and if I do not agree to this demand, the document is to be sent to Ottawa for the purpose of getting the Government to discontinue the purchase of *Leifur*. The names already on this document are Magnús Paulson, Friðfinnur Jóhannesson, B. L. Baldvinsson, Jón Júlíus, Sveinn Björnsson, and Sigurgeir Stefánsson." Then the Editor adds, "Send your petition boys. I shall follow with mine."

There is no question that the feeling in this matter was running high among the Icelandic people in Winnipeg, as the following stanza, composed at that time, shows:

Ó þung er þjóðar smán,
þrælar valda,
þeir elta eins manns lán,
en allir gjalda.
Eg bið ei um að bölvun nein þeim
mæti
en býst þó við, að kvöl þá síðar græti.

This matter was dealt with by the Icelandic Society in Winnipeg but no solution found by that body so Helgi Jónsson, the Editor and owner, was forced to protect himself and his paper by appealing to disinterested and highly respectable members of the Icelandic population in Winnipeg and their finding follows:

"In accordance with a request of Helgi Jónsson, owner and editor of the newspaper *Leifur*, we wish to state that, in our opinion, it is unnecessary to complain to the government about the editorship of *Leifur*, and that the methods in-

dulged in by his opponents are unfortunate and useless. We also wish to state that we are satisfied with the editorial accomplishment of Leifur as it has been when we take all the circumstances into consideration, and have confidence in Helgi Jónsson, the owner, that he will continue to improve it hereafter as he has done in the past, so his paper may reflect honor on the Icelanders and be useful to them."

Jón Bjarnason, Árni Friðriksson, Eyjólfur Eyjólfsson, Friðjón Friðriksson, Sigtryggur Jónasson, and many others says Leifur.

It seems that this declaration was sufficient to silence the dispute about Leifur. The paper continued to appear regularly except for a short while during 1885. However, during the latter part of that year the owner's health began to fail, and the responsibility of conducting the paper and the editorial policy fell on the shoulders of a young man who had joined the staff of the paper at that time, Eggert Jóhannson, whom many of you will remember and respect. Helgi moved to Saskatchewan where he selected an extensive tract of land for an Icelandic colony and named Thingvalla Settlement. He himself built an extensive store building at the place called Shellmouth, where the Manitoba North Western Railway, then under construction, was supposed to go through, but that expectation did not materialize. The railway went some 18 miles further south, through Harrowby and Langenburg and as Langenburg was much nearer to Thingvalla Settlement than Shellmouth, Helgi was obliged to move to Langenburg where he and his manager, Bjarni Westman traded with the people from the Thingvalla Settlement for

many years, but the first trading post built by Icelanders in Saskatchewan stands yet in Shellmouth as a silent witness to the brave and courageous man who built it in 1885. Helgi was still the owner of the weekly newspaper Leifur and continued to be its owner until its publication was discontinued on the 6th of June, 1886.

The social activities of the Icelandic people in Winnipeg were not confined to their discussion of the newspaper Leifur. As I have already mentioned, the Ladies' Aid or the Ladies' Association had been pretty well occupied in taking care of the new arrivals from Iceland and providing for their needs. They also inaugurated the first Mid-Winter Feast (Þorablót) by a record breaking gathering of Icelanders in Winnipeg on the 25th of January, 1884, where after a bounteous feast, ten speeches, and five original poems were delivered.

The theatrical art was not overlooked by the early Icelanders in Winnipeg. No fewer than ten plays were staged by them in the years 1882-1887. The principal persons taking part in these plays were Magnús Paulson, W. H. Paulson, Jón Blöndal, Sveinn Björnsson, Guðný Jónsdóttir, Sigríður Jónsdóttir, Sigurgeir Stefánsson, Arngrímur Jónsson, brother of Guðný and Sigríður. All these theatrical performances of the early Icelanders in Winnipeg, were staged at the Icelandic Hall, 137 Jemima Street, except one which, at the instigation of Helgi Jónsson, was staged at Victoria Hall on Notre Dame Avenue for the benefit of the English speaking public and is the only occasion that such an undertaking has been attempted by the Icelandic people of Winnipeg. The attempt was not very successful. Weather conditions when the performance took place on the 30th

of February, 1884, according to the newspaper *Leifur*, were not favorable and the attendance therefore meagre. The top admission was 75 cents, and Helgi says in his paper that his financial loss was small. The play staged at Victoria Hall was "Hellismenn" and, according to the *Free Press*, those who took part were Björn Blöndal, taking the part of Helgi, student from Hólar; Stefán Pálson was Grímur, the other student; Laranzius, the judge or sheriff was played by Sigurgeir Stefánsson; Skuggasveinn, the outlaw by Eyjólfur Guðmundson; Haraldur, an outlaw, by W. H. Paulson; Ketill, by Sveinn Björnsson; Ögmundur by A. F. Reykdal; Galdrahéðinn by Arngrímur Jónsson; the two farmers by Jón Blöndal and Grímur Guðmundson; Sigurður in Dal by Magnús Paulson; Ásta by Guðný Jónsdóttir. The names of the wife of Laranzius, and that of Laranzius' house maid, are not given in the *Manitoba Free Press*, which praises the enterprising spirit of the Icelandic people, and their good qualities.

The congregational activities among the Icelandic people in Winnipeg during this period had been somewhat dormant, although reading of sermons on Sundays was never abandoned altogether, yet the people realized fully the hopeless situation they were in as far as Christian culture was concerned. They were not ready to join any foreign language organization, and there were no Icelandic ministers immediately available. It was at this stage that a meeting, at the instigation of Friðjón Friðriksson, was held in the store of the Investment Company on Ross Street, where it was agreed to extend a call to Rev. Jón Bjarnason who was serving in pastoral capacity at Dvergastein in Iceland. This matter came before a meeting of the Icelandic Society on the 21st

of October, 1883, and a formal invitation was sent to Rev. Bjarnason to come to Winnipeg and take charge of congregational organization and Christian cultural work among the Icelandic people, both in Canada, and in the United States. While this arrangement was unanimously agreed to by all, it was frankly stated that no definite salary could be guaranteed. In early January, 1884 the following letter was received from Rev. Jón Bjarnason:

"I sent my resignation by last mail to the Bishop, as Pastor of the Eyjafjörð Congregational District, so you see it is fully decided that we will come as promised."

On the 9th of March, 1884, a meeting of the congregation in Winnipeg was called by its president, Sveinn Björnsson, half-brother of Dr. Ólafur Björnsson, whom you will all remember, and who was a leading member among the Icelanders in Winnipeg. At that meeting the expected arrival of the minister was discussed. The president called upon the members, and all who were desirous of improving Christian activities among the Icelandic people, to join hands, in extending a fitting reception to the minister and his family. He also urged them to organize and endeavor to extend their congregational work.

The newspaper, *Leifur* says that Rev. Bjarnason and family arrived on the 10th of August 1884. He delivered his first sermon in Winnipeg on Wednesday, 20th August, before a capacity house. The seating capacity of the hall was 240, and in addition as many stood as could be admitted. The text of Rev. Jón Bjarnason's sermon was St. Matthew 17, 1-9, particularly these words of Peter "Lord, it is good for us to be here". This is the last paragraph of

that masterful sermon: "I pray that our work for the Church of Christ, here or wherever we dwell, may bring forth such a fruit that we, in sorrow and strife, suffering and death, from the depth of our hearts, reiterate the words of Christ's Apostle: "Lord it is good for us to be here"."

At the close of this service Rev. Bjarnason announced that the Icelandic Ladies' Association was holding a temperance meeting the following Friday night. That meeting was held as advertised under the chairmanship of Rev. Bjarnason and a Temperance Society organized. About 40 people joined, but only seven men. First officers of the temperance organization were Rev. J. Bjarnason, Mrs. Lára Bjarnason, Jón Björnsson, Andres Reykdal and Mrs. Signý Eyjólfsson.

On Sunday, the 24th of August, Rev. Bjarnason preached his second sermon to a crowded house. Forty-six new members joined the congregation which then amounted to 183 members. At the third service held in the Icelandic Hall on Jemima Street, 130 new members joined so that the congregation had increased in membership by 176 in eleven days. A meeting of the congregation was held on the 26th of August at which two committees were appointed. — One to revise the congregational constitution, the other to arrange for the use of the Icelandic Hall as required by the congregation. Promises for financing the congregation were also taken for the first time among the Winnipeg Icelanders, and \$152.00 were pledged, and \$30.00 paid up at the meeting. Pall S. Bardal informed the meeting that the Trustees had arranged with the minister that his yearly salary was to be \$1,000.00. All these arrangements were unanimously approved by the meeting.

I can now leave the congregational and the progressive social activities of the Icelanders in Winnipeg in very capable hands while I revert to wider fields for a few moments. In my discourse on this same subject last year, I pointed out that the Province of Manitoba had joined the Canadian Confederation in the year 1870. Before that date, all the land in Western Canada whose waters drained into Hudson's Bay, was by a Royal Charter the property of the Hudson's Bay Company and under its full command and control. As you all know, this vast territory was populated to a certain extent by Indians and French half-breeds, but none of these inhabitants were consulted when the agreement between the Hudson's Bay Company, the Imperial Government, and the Canadian Government of Sir John A. MacDonald were consummated and all land and mining rights of the Hudson's Bay Company were handed over to the Canadian Government for 300,000 pounds sterling and 20% of all the best farming land which would be settled during the following 50 years. The company was to retain unlimited commercial rights and be exempt from taxation.

The Metis, or Half-breeds, were not consulted regarding these changes which took place in 1869, and they resented it although every male over 21 years of age was granted full ownership of 240 acres of land, inside the boundary of the new Province. When the newly appointed Canadian Governor came west to take up his duties as Governor of the new province, Louis Riel, the leader of the Metis, met him with a party at the International Boundary line and turned him back. This was in October, 1869, and in November, Riel, with his men, took possession of Fort Garry which was the headquarters of

the Hudson's Bay Company. Riel then called a convention which passed a Bill of Rights. That Bill of Rights was a masterpiece and some of its clauses were adopted by the Federal Government later. In December, a provisional government was set up and on the 29th Louis Riel was made president of the new Republic of Western Canada. Riel was well educated. His personality was commanding, and he was an orator of the first order, but he is said to have been flighty and vain.

The English-speaking people made two attempts to oust Riel from his position but both failed. As a consequence of the later attempt, an Orangeman from Ontario, by the name of Thomas Scott, was executed on the 4th March 1870 and this act roused the whole of English-speaking Canada against Riel. An expedition was sent against Riel from the East under the command of Lord Wolseley who captured Fort Garry on the 24th August 1870. Riel was not arrested as he had powerful friends. He also had strongly entrenched foes, but Ottawa let matters lie. In the general Dominion election of 1874, Riel was elected for the electoral district of Provencher. He went to Ottawa, signed the Parliamentary Pledge, and took the oath. He never took his seat in the House of Commons, however, as criminal proceedings had been instituted against him in the Courts of Manitoba. When he did not attend any of the parliamentary sessions, a motion was brought before the House demanding his appearance by April 1st, and passed, although 68 votes were cast against it.

In another Dominion election, held five months subsequent to the one of 1874, Riel was again returned to the House of Commons at Ottawa for the same constituency, but when he arrived

in Ottawa a judgment was rendered by the Chief Justice of Manitoba, declaring Louis Riel an outlaw because of criminal behaviour in the Province of Manitoba. He then went to southern Montana where he stayed for awhile.

I have already stated, that the Metis in the newly formed Province of Manitoba had resented the transfer of territorial rights by the Hudson's Bay Company to the Canadian Government without them being consulted. There were other grievances as well, such as depriving all half-breeds living in, or moving west of Manitoba, of their land grants, and driving the half-breeds away from their former hunting grounds by a new survey and new settlers. All this created unrest and almost chaotic conditions among the half-breeds. One petition after another went to Ottawa, signed not only by the Metis, but the English and Scots as well, asking for rectification of these matters before they became a real menace to the safety of the western people, but the government paid no attention. The next move of the half-breeds was to send for Riel who came and formed a new government at St. Laurent, about 500 miles north west of Winnipeg.

The North West Rebellion broke out in March, 1885. The first place seized by Riel and his men was the small town of Carlton situated on the northerly branch of the Saskatchewan River. At Duck Lake Riel took a large warehouse owned by the Dominion Government, and stocked with provisions, guns, and ammunition. When Louis Riel and his half-breed army had gone this far, the Dominion Government felt that the time to act had arrived, and sent two military detachments to quell the uprising, one from Toronto, the Royal Grenadiers. In that regiment was one Iclander, Ser-

geant Jón Guðmundsson, from Dalasýsla in Iceland. The other regiment was from Winnipeg, the Nintieth Winnipeg Rifles in which, according to Leifur, there were the following Icelanders: Corporal Jóhann Pálsson, Thorsteinn Pétursson, Thorvarður Jóhannsson, Stefán Guðmundsson, Magnús Jónsson, Jón Dínusson, A. F. Reykdal, Páll S. Bardal, Runólfur Runólfsson, Kristján Pétursson, Corporal Jón Júlíus, Jón Blöndal, Björn Blöndal, Stefán Guðmundsson, Helgi Bjarnason, Sigurður Árnason, Jakob Jónsson, Jón Guðmundsson, 18 in all, but in addition to these 18 was Jón Jónasson who worked on the transportation caravans. Both of these regiments, and in fact all military activities were under the supreme command of Frederick D. Middleton.

The first encounter by the Winnipeg Regiment with the Riel forces was at Fish Creek. Four or five men were killed, and 40 were wounded by the Winnipeg Regiment. From Fish Creek the Regiment went to Batoche, the station and stronghold of Riel. There the fighting lasted four days at the conclusion of which the half-breeds surrendered and Riel was taken prisoner. During this encounter Middleton lost eight men, killed, and 42 were wounded. One of them was Icelandic, Magnús Jónsson, who early in the morning was shot in the arm but kept on fighting until nearly noon, or until he was forcibly removed from the field of combat. The losses sustained by Riel and his men were about 65 killed and about 100 wounded.

Middleton arrived in Winnipeg from the West on the 14th of July, 1885, and was received with open arms. The Icelandic Progressive Society in Winnipeg held a reception on 1st of August 1885,

for those of their countrymen who had taken part in the rebellion and upheld the glorious reputation of their forefathers. This was a great success, and said to have been the most ambitious social undertaking of the Icelanders in Winnipeg up to that time. Jón Júlíus and Jóhann Pálsson related some of their experiences during the rebellion. Louis Riel was taken to Regina and tried for high treason. A great array of legal talent appeared for both sides, and the feeling of the people ran exceedingly high. The plea of Riel's lawyer was insanity which Riel resented: "I scorn to put in that plea", he said, "I, the leader of my people, the center of a National movement, a Priest and Prophet, to be proved an idiot." He tried to take his defence in his own hands. He also addressed the jury which was composed of Englishmen. A writer, who was present on that occasion, describes the occurrences as follows: "Dramatic in extreme was Riel. At any rate he spoke with a belief that he was right, but as he proceeded the quiet and low tone was discarded, his body swayed to and fro in strong agitation, his hands accomplished a series of wonderful gestures as he spoke with impassioned eloquence. His listeners were spellbound and well they might be as such concluding assertion with terrible earnestness, with the effect and force of a trumpet blast, rolled from his gifted tongue." After the jury had brought in the verdict of guilty, and the judge had pronounced the death sentence and set the date of execution, Riel bowed to the court and asked: "Is that on Friday, your Honor?" When a stay of execution was granted by Judge Richardson for a period of twenty-nine days, Riel wrote him the following letter:

"To his honor Hugh Richardson, Judge, Regina.

Your Honor: I thank you for having goodly postponed the execution of the sentence against me. I shall make use of those days added to my life so as to prepare better, and if, by God's mercy and favorable human decision my life is to be spared, I will endeavor to render it more useful than it has been in the past. I pray to God that twenty-nine days be added to your life, in reward for the twenty-nine days which you have kindly consented to grant me. My thanks to all those who have so generously contributed and worked to secure me such precious addition to my days. To you and them all,

my thanks, but warmest of my thanks,

Very respectfully,

Your humble and obedient,

Louis David Riel

17th September, 1885

Regina Jail

The November night was drawing to its close. Riel said to the priest who had been with him all night, "Courage Pere, I believe still in God". "To the last", said Father Andre, "Yes, to the very last I believe in Him". As the grey dawn broke and spread on the morning of the 16th of November, 1885, the guards appeared at the death cell of Louis Riel and with them he stepped bravely from the cell to the gallows, and in a few minutes he was no longer among the living. His body was brought to St. Boniface where it was interred on the 19th of December and where it still rests.

New Industries In Canada

Some 450 British subsidiary firms have been established in Canada, having a reported capital investment of over \$600 millions. A further twenty-five have been established in this country during the past year. There are 75 or more "refugee" industries, from European countries, which have been located chiefly in the central provinces. These industries employ nearly 6,000 workers and produce goods valued at around \$50 millions a year.

These industries have introduced many new skills to Canada. For example, the selective utilization of the former weed wood, "western hemlock", for the manufacture of box shooks, flooring and lumber; the production of wool tops; the manufacture of spec-

ial hydraulic equipment, refueling pumps and many other intricate parts for aircraft; the production of precision instruments, tennis racquets, china artware from Canadian clays, and new flax commodities. During the second World War, many of these plants were converted wholly or in part to the production of specialized war equipment and played an appreciable part in winning the war.

As a result of changed political conditions in Eastern Europe, many industries with new skills are again seeking entry to Canada from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland.

It is expected that between 100 and 150 more new industries from other countries will be established in Canada during the coming year.

The Gimli Memorial Recreation Centre

December 18, 1948 was a day of rejoicing and filled with pride for the citizens of the Town of Gimli, Manitoba, and the neighboring community. That day brought to a realization the cherished hopes of a number of tireless citizens who were determined to provide for the young people of the town and adjoining district a recreation centre worthy of its name and dedication. Almost within view of the spot where landed the original pioneers of "Nýja Ísland" over seventy-four years ago stands this imposing structure, — a Memorial to the gallant sons and grandsons of those early settlers, who gave their lives in World Wars I and II in the hope that their sacrifice might preserve the ideals of a social order that their forefathers were the first to found in their native land over a thousand years ago.

The building is an arch-roofed structure of 200' x 100', supported on a steel re-enforced concrete base. It provides an ice surface of regulation hockey size 80' x 180' for games and skating, with ample seating capacity for spectators on each side. On the ground floor at one end is a room 20' x 100' partitioned into two dressing rooms and a spacious canteen. The upper floor of this portion has a snack bar, dressing rooms for hockey players and a large recreation room for dancing, games or cards.

The financing of this undertaking may well be termed a unique achievement and entailed considerable sacrifice for many of the contributors, but it also illustrated community co-operation at its best. For a town having a population of less than 1300 it is no small accomplishment to erect and

fully pay for a building such as this which at present day prices of materials and labor can conservatively be valued at \$50,000.00. All the community organizations joined hands in support of the campaign for funds, and few indeed were the individuals who did not willingly contribute money, labor or both to complete the project.

The funds were raised by every known device: pledges from the citizens to donate a portion of their income to the cause, cash donations, various forms of entertainments, prize draws, and subscriptions from friendly business firms outside the community. Virtually no source of funds was left untapped. All the labor, with the exception of the two foremen, who were paid for part of their time, was voluntary.

Neither the grandeur of the structure, nor its cost, are however, of paramount importance or interest. What is of importance, is what it symbolizes and represents, — the sacrifices of those to whom it is dedicated, the efforts of those who were responsible for its erection, and the whole hearted co-operation of a community.

The "Memorial" is an expression of a hope for the future of a community that full well realizes that education of its youth is no longer confined to the three R's, nor contained within the four walls of a classroom.

Modern education is broader than the limits of these; it includes training for leisure and recreation, and stresses the physical as well as the mental development of youth. It was partly this aspect of education that prompted those responsible for the erection of this "Memorial" "to see it through".

At a special dedication ceremony, held at the "Memorial Centre" there was unveiled a bronze plaque bearing the inscription "Gimli Memorial Centre, erected in honor of our citizens who gave loyal and noble service in World Wars I and II, and in memory of those who gave their lives. — Their bodies are buried in peace but their name liveth for evermore."

After World War I many Canadian communities expended vast sums of money for war memorials. Typical of these were columns of stone or statues in bronze after depicting a soldier poised for attack with a drawn bayonet,

flanked on either side with gaping cannon mouths. To many, these were only a stark reminder of a grim struggle, death and sacrifice. Fortunately our present memorials serve an equally noble and a much more useful purpose. Gimli and other communities have, and are building, such appropriate memorials serving not only to glorify those who served in wars to win freedom and maintain our liberties, but memorials dedicated also in part to the youth of Canada who we hope will serve our country in the peace that was so dearly won.

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